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John A. Smith

June 10 1861



# A HISTORY OF METHODISM:

COMPRISING

*A VIEW OF THE RISE OF THIS REVIVAL OF SPIRITUAL RELIGION  
IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, AND  
OF THE PRINCIPAL AGENTS BY WHOM IT WAS  
PROMOTED IN EUROPE AND AMERICA;*

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF

The Doctrine and Polity of Episcopal Methodism  
In the United States, and the Means and Manner of its Extension  
Down to A.D. 1884.

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BY

HOLLAND N. McTYEIRE, D.D., 1824-1889.  
One of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

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## PREFACE.

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THIS work was begun at the request of the Centenary Committee, and was encouraged by the recommendation of the College of Bishops, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Much the larger portion of the volume deals in that wherein all Methodists agree. I have endeavored to give, along with sketches of the chief actors in preparing and carrying forward the great work of God, the truths that were vital to it, and the type of Christian experience developed by it; also the gradual and providential evolution of the system, both in doctrine and polity; so that one who honors the book with a perusal may come to the end, not only with a tolerably clear understanding of the polity and doctrines of Episcopal Methodism, but, what is of infinitely greater importance, he may obtain some personal knowledge of that way of salvation which Wesleyans teach.

No one, with proper ideas, ever looked over a life that had been lived, or a book that had been written, without seeing and feeling how it might have been bettered. In giving this volume to the public I am mindful that the proverb, "The best is often the enemy of the good," applies to authorship as well as to many other things. By waiting to realize our highest ideal of excellence, we may be restrained from making a contribution to religious literature which, however imperfect, would be of some service.

Several local histories have been written, and well written, giving account of the rise and progress of Methodism in States and Conferences. Of these I have made mention in the following pages, and, as will be seen, have made use in the preparation of this more general view of the Church.

Moral or abstract truth knows no point of the compass, but historical truth does; and the truth of history proves this. Methodism in the South has suffered injustice from the manner in which it has been presented by learned, honest, and able writers in the North. The writer does not presume to be free from the infirmities to which he is liable in common with others. He proposes to tell the truth as he sees it; and this may lead him to tell truths affecting others which they have not seen, and to present admitted facts in a different light.

The reader is advertised that this is not a history of Southern Methodism, but of Methodism from a Southern point of view. In the South, Methodism was first successfully planted, and from thence it spread North, and East, and West. If all the members claimed by all the branches be counted, there is a preponderance of American Methodism now, as at the beginning, in the South.

Of course I am largely indebted to writers who have gone before, and I make my acknowledgment unreservedly of such indebtedness. The first part of the volume treats of matters that have passed through the hands of many writers; and in various forms of statement these stock subjects have gone into history. Little more can now be done than to present a judicious compilation from the



best sources of information; and the reader, who has not access to these or leisure to consult them, will prefer utility here to originality.

The list of books appended indicates those most consulted, besides biographies and autobiographies and fugitive sketches contained in newspaper files running through many years. The Minutes and Journals of General and Annual Conferences from 1773 to the present, the old Disciplines and Magazines and Reviews, have been chief sources. This method is adopted as more convenient than burdening the margin with foot-notes. When an authority is therein specifically named it is done not only to show the source of information, if it be questioned, but as a suggestion to the reader to consult the same if fuller information is desired on the subject.

Methodism has been long enough and potent enough in the world to enter into general history, and materials for its delineation begin now to be found everywhere. But certain writers have wrought in this mine more, and to more advantage, than others. Jesse Lee was the father of our Church history. After him Dr. Nathan Bangs gathered and compiled richly and industriously, and his writings, without the graces of style, have a high merit. Dr. Abel Stevens has brought all under obligations who come after him. His patience and skill in collecting and sifting Methodist history, and the literary style which he has displayed, cannot be too much admired. The first wrote when there was no North and no South in Methodism; the second, when these began to be; the third, when they were realities.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the Rev. Luke Tyerman has not only given a great amount of fresh and readable matter, but has critically worked the life out of several favorite legends that were passing into fixed history. His manner of treating some subjects has given offense, justly or unjustly, to a few Wesleyans; but no writer of Methodist history, since Southey, has so generally (and in his case favorably) influenced the opinion of the outside world, and given direction to the drift of secular writers, as Mr. Tyerman. His volumes are a *thesaurus*. Having access to original sources, and the taste and skill for making and combining researches, and the candor (which, in the opinion of his critics, verges on an affectation, and therefore an overdoing, of independence) to utter them, he has superseded many volumes by his own. It is the quality of an Englishman (and if a fault, leaning to virtue's side) to take his observations of all things in heaven and earth from his national stand-point. With all his industry in collecting information, and his skill in presenting it through copious volumes that never weary the reader, Mr. Tyerman was so unsatisfactory in his treatment of American Methodism, at a material point, that the New York edition of his great work required an Appendix from an American author (Dr. Stevens) to set the English author right; and this, the Appendix does thoroughly. If one of Tyerman's breadth and fairness needs such correction, it is no strange thing if Stevens, Simpson, Porter, Daniels, and others of that latitude, have not always presented Methodism at the other end of their country in a favorable or acceptable light. It is due to the condition of astronomers rather than to their disposition that some constellations in the heavens cannot be viewed from certain stations on the earth's surface.

It is hoped that this attempt by a Southern writer at a general history of Methodism may have the result which Jesse Lee sought, as stated in his Preface: "I desire to show to all our societies and friends that the doctrines which

we held and preached in the beginning we have continued to support and maintain uniformly to the present day. We have changed the economy and discipline of our Church at times, as we judged for the benefit and happiness of our preachers and people, and the Lord has wonderfully owned and prospered us. It may be seen from the following account how the Lord has, from the very small beginnings, raised us up to be a great and prosperous people. It is very certain that the goodness of our doctrine and discipline, our manner of receiving preachers, and of sending them into different circuits, and the frequent changes among them from one circuit to another, have greatly contributed to the promotion of religion, the increase of our societies, and the happiness of our preachers." H. N. M.

Vanderbilt University, August 20, 1884.

#### A LIST OF SOME OF THE AUTHORITIES CONSULTED AND USED.

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 The Introduction of Protestantism into Mississippi and the South-west: Rev. J. G. Jones. 1866. The MS. History of Methodism in Mississippi, by the same author, has been kindly submitted for reference, and found to be very useful. This interesting addition to our denominational literature ought to be published.  
 The voluminous manuscripts and letters of the late Rev. William Winans, D.D., have been loaned the author by the kindness of his daughter, Mrs. Mary Winans Wall, of Louisiana. Dr. Winans, with his own painstaking hand, copied the letters which he wrote, even on ordinary topics, and preserved them. His times and correspondence extended through the most important periods of our history; and just surprise has been expressed that so long a time has elapsed since his death (1857) without any publication, in whole or in part, of his literary remains.  
 The papers and correspondence of the late Bishop Soule—obligingly furnished by his daughter, Mrs. Conwell, of Nashville, and his nephew, Rev. Francis A. Soule, of the State of New York—have been found valuable, though not extensive.

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• GEO WHITEFIELD •



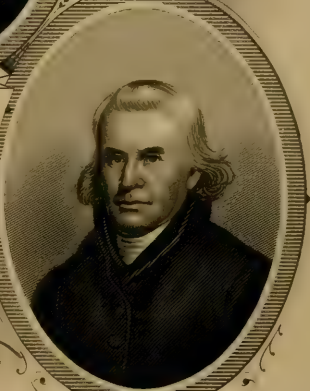
• CHARLES WESLEY •



JOHN WESLEY



THOMAS COKE



• FRANCIS ASBURY •

# HISTORY OF METHODISM.

## CHAPTER I.

Church Founders—Providential Instruments—The Wesley Family: Its Origin and Times.

IT was not new doctrine but new life the first Methodists sought for themselves and for others. To realize in the hearts and conduct of men the true ideal of Christianity, to maintain its personal experience, and to extend it—this was their design; and their system of government grew up out of this, and was accordingly shaped by it.

The mission of Luther was to reform a corrupted Christianity; that of Wesley, to revive a dying one. Lutheranism dealt more with controversy; Wesleyanism, with experience. The abuses and errors of Rome, its defiant attitude and oppressive rule, made combatants of the Reformers. Their prayer was, "Teach my hands to war, and my fingers to fight." The Methodists came forth as evangelists. They persuaded men. With existing institutions and creeds they had no quarrel. "In their bosoms there was no rankling grudge against authorities; there was no particle of that venom which, wherever it lodges, infects and paralyzes the religious affections." Their controversy was not with Church or State authorities, but with sin and Satan; and their one object was to save souls.

The way of reformers is to begin by finding fault with others. "We begin," they said, "by finding fault with ourselves." Methodists never sympathized with those who deny the "form of godliness;" it is decent in their eyes and useful, and they cared for it; but they were more careful to have "the power thereof."

Whenever the Lord would do a work in the earth, a man is got ready; and the study of that man and of his providential preparation is a fit introduction to the history of the work. St. Paul's truism, "For every house is builded by some man," is not contradicted by what follows—"but he that built all things is God." The word *founder* grates harshly upon some ears when it is ap-



plied to the Church, but ecclesiastical history justifies it. Without irreverence, and without derogating from the honor of its divine Head, men may be called founders of those various sects by which the Church is seen to exist in the world. Such instruments God has raised up all along the ages, and their lives and labors have made eras. "The Lord built him a Solomon, that Solomon might build him a house;" and Solomon's genius was seen in every part of the sacred Temple. The Lutheran, Presbyterian, Congregational, Protestant Episcopal, Moravian, and Baptist Churches all bear the impress of those master-builders who, under God, shaped their polity, formulated their creeds, and illustrated their spirit.

If the four Gospels show the individuality of their inspired authors, and the style of the man is seen in the deliverance of the apostle, we may not be surprised if the character of founders can be traced in the religious bodies to which they stand thus providentially related. This admission of the human element is agreeable to the divine origin and authority of the Church. Its truths abide, its principles change not, for they are of God; but the bringing them to bear upon the world, for its salvation, according to times and circumstances, is of human devising under the promise of gracious guidance. Bible doctrines cannot be increased or diminished; but they may be arranged and presented with more or less force, clearness, and consistency by the various schools of religious thought whose nomenclature testifies to their parentage.

The history of Methodism cannot be given without a biography of John Wesley. To him belongs the distinction of Founder. Great men by a natural law come forward in groups; but to insure the success and unity of a movement, there must be a solitary preëminence. While Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, John Fletcher, and Thomas Coke were mighty auxiliaries, it is around John Wesley that the religious movement of the eighteenth century, called Methodism, centers. He was born June 17, 1703 —the son of Samuel Wesley, rector of Epworth, in Lincolnshire, England.

The founder of Methodism makes once an allusion to his "grandfather's father"—Bartholomew. It was during the closing years of the long reign of Elizabeth that Bartholomew Wesley was born—about the year 1600. While at the university

he applied himself to the study of physic, as well as of divinity; and the knowledge which he acquired was of great advantage to him in the dark days of his after-life. In 1640 he was inducted to the rectory of Charmouth, and in 1650 to that of Catherston; both of which he held until 1662, when, having espoused the side of the Puritans, Bartholomew Wesley, like many others, was driven from his rectories by the Act of Uniformity. After this, though he preached occasionally, he had to support himself and his family by the practice of physic.\*

At the restoration of the Stuarts in the person of Charles II. (1661), the High-church party, with king and court on their side, set about the suppression of Presbyterians, Independents, and all Non-conformists. The Act of Uniformity was enforced in its rigor, and upward of two thousand ministers, with their families, were ejected from their livings.

A glance at some of the ministers ejected and silenced shows how this act impoverished the pulpit of that day: Edmund Calamy, who studied at the rate of sixteen hours a day, and was one of the most popular preachers in the capitol; Matthew Pool, who spent ten years upon his "*Synopsis Criticorum*," in five volumes folio; John Goodwin, the Arminian author of "*Redemption Redeemed*;" John Owen, Stephen Charnock, John Flavel; Rich-

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\*The author of "*Memorials of the Wesley Family*" has gone back of that: "The father of Bartholomew Wesley was Sir Herbert Westley, of Westleigh, in the county of Devon. His mother was Elizabeth de Wellesley, of Dangan, in Ireland. What we have hitherto known of this distinguished family has marked them as remarkable for learning, piety, poetry, and music. We must now add these other equally peculiar characteristics, loyalty and chivalry. Taking one step only backward in tracing their genealogy, we find in both the father and mother of Bartholomew Wesley persons who were permitted intercourse with the leading minds of the age, and who were privileged to take an active part in molding that age in its moral, religious, and social aspects. A knight of the shire was a person of distinction and influence. The issue of the marriage of Sir Herbert and Elizabeth Wesley was three sons, named respectively William, Harphan, and Bartholomew. The two elder of these appear to have died without issue. Bartholomew married the daughter of Sir Henry Colley, of Kildare, Ireland. In person he was of small stature; called 'the puny parson.' The average height of the Wesleys was from five feet four to five feet six inches. Between this limited range stood Samuel Wesley, rector of Epworth, and his two sons, John and Charles. The same standard of height characterizes those descendants of the family who still survive, belonging to the Epworth branch." And John says of himself: "In the year 1769 I weighed one hundred and twenty-two pounds; in the year 1783 I weighed not a pound more nor a pound less."



ard and Joseph Alleine, whose well-known practical writings have been blessed to thousands; Richard Baxter, Philip Henry, and John Howe.

By Act of Uniformity it was provided that "every parson, vicar, or other minister whatsoever, now enjoying any ecclesiastical benefice or promotion, within this realm of England," who neglected or refused to declare publicly, before his congregation, his "unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things contained and prescribed" in the Book of Common Prayer, before the feast of St. Bartholomew (1662), should be deprived of his place. All school-masters who refused to subscribe to this declaration were to suffer three months' imprisonment. It also provided that if any minister, not episcopally ordained, should presume to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper after St. Bartholomew's day (August 24), he should, for every such offense, forfeit the sum of £100; and if he presumed to lecture or preach in any church, chapel, or other place of worship whatever, within the realm of England, he should suffer three months' imprisonment in the common jail.

In 1664 the Conventicle Act was passed, which provided that "every person above sixteen years of age present at any meeting of more than five persons besides the household, under a pretense of any exercise of religion, in other manner than is the practice of the Church of England, shall, for the first offense, be sent to gaol three months, till he pay a £5 fine; for the second offense, six months, till he pay a £10 fine; and for the third offense, be transported to some of the American plantations." To complete the triumph of the oppressor, and to deprive both ministers and people of any comfort, as Non-conformists, Parliament in 1665 added outrage to injury, by passing the execrable Five Mile Act, which provided that it should be a penal offense for any Non-conformist minister to teach in a school, or to come within five miles (except as a traveler in passing) of any city, borough, or corporate town, or of any place in which he had preached or taught since the passing of the Act of Uniformity.

In 1675 the Test Act was passed, which provided that all who refused to take the oaths and to receive the sacrament, according to the rites of the Church of England, should be debarred from public employment. This was the last turn of the screw. The Revolution of 1688 dethroned the Stuarts, and the Act of

Toleration became law in 1689, securing liberty in the worship of God to Protestant Dissenters.

John, the only son of the ejected Bartholomew Wesley, was born about the year 1636. Even when a boy at school he had deep religious convictions and began to keep a diary of "God's gracious dealings" with him, which, with slight interruptions, was continued to the end of his life. At the usual age he was entered a student of Oxford and became M.A. At one time he strongly wished to go as a missionary to Maryland, in America. Probably the expense of such a journey presented difficulties which he found it impossible to surmount. He was never episcopally ordained, but was ordained in the same way as Timothy—by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, and possibly without even that much ceremony. He passed his examination before Cromwell's "Triers," and was appointed to a living in May, 1658. A man of "gifts and grace," his ministry was the means of converting sinners in every place in which it was exercised, and he preached in many places. Under the persecutions that followed the Restoration, he was four times imprisoned, one imprisonment extending till very near the day when the Act of Uniformity finally expelled both father and son. He came joyfully home, and preached each Lord's-day till August 17, 1662, when he delivered his farewell sermon to a weeping audience, from Acts xx. 32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace." John Wesley died about the age of forty-three, and left behind him two sons, Samuel and Matthew, and a faithful wife who remained his widow for half a century.

Dr. A. Clarke calls attention to the fact that the grandfather of the founder of Methodism was a lay preacher and an itinerant evangelist. Indeed, we find in this John Wesley's history an epitome of the later Methodism. Samuel, his son, was educated at the Free School at Dorchester. Young Wesley remained here until he was a little more than fifteen years of age, when he was sent to an academy in London, where he continued until he had nearly arrived at the age of twenty-one. He came into the world four months after that dark day of St. Bartholomew, when his father and his grandfather, with two thousand other godly ministers of Christ, were ejected from their churches and driven from their homes. Like them he was intended for the Christian



ministry; but, considering the treatment which they had experienced at the hands of the episcopal party, it was scarcely probable that their youthful descendant would feel a wish to enter the ministry of the Established Church. His father and his grandfathers, though they had all been the occupants of Church livings, were, so far as prelacy and the use of the liturgy are concerned, Dissenters; and his sympathies were with them. He acknowledges that when at the Dissenters' School "he was forward enough to write lampoons and pasquils against Church and State;" "was fired with hopes of suffering;" "and often wished to be brought before kings and rulers, because he thought what he did was done for the sake of Christ." Subsequently, by a course of reading and reasoning, he was led to change his opinions, and formed a resolution to renounce the Dissenters and attach himself to the Established Church.

He lived at that time with his mother and an old aunt, both of whom were too strongly attached to the Dissenting doctrines to have borne, with any patience, the disclosure of his design. He therefore got up early one morning, and, without acquainting any one with his purpose, set out for Oxford, and entered himself at Exeter College. To ride to college was a thing not to be thought of: to use his own expression, he "*footed it*." His books, his clothes, and his other luggage, were all probably carried in a knapsack on his back. (Samuel Wesley entered college as a *servitor*.) A "servitor" is a student who attends and waits on other scholars or students, and receives, as a compensation, his maintenance. Such was the position of young Wesley. He was determined to secure the benefits of a university education; and, in the absence of money and of friends, he became a servant in order to find himself bread. There was no disgrace in this; and yet it is not difficult to imagine that, notwithstanding his cleverness, he would be subjected to taunts from beardless youths, who, in all respects except one, were his inferiors. A young man, twenty-one years of age, respectably connected, but poor as poverty could make him, he resolved upon the acquisition of academic fame; and, in the struggle, patiently, if not cheerfully, submitted to annoyances for the sake of obtaining that upon which his heart was set. Besides attending to the humiliating duties of a servitor, he composed exercises for those who had more money than mind, and gave instructions to others who

wished to profit by his lessons; and thus, by toil and frugality, the fatherless and friendless scholar not only managed to support himself, but when he retired from Oxford, in 1688, with B.A. attached to his name, he was seven pounds fifteen shillings richer than he was when he entered it in 1683. Nor is this all. Whilst occupied with his daily duties, his benevolent heart would not permit him to live wholly to himself. He yearned to benefit others; and it is a remarkable coincidence that the objects of his sympathy were of the same class as those who, forty-five years afterward, were visited and helped by his sons, John and Charles, and the other Oxford Methodists. "Notwithstanding the weightiness of his college work, and the lightness of his college purse," he found time to visit the wretched inmates of Oxford jail, and relieved them as far as he was able. Writing to his two sons, in 1730, when they had begun of their own accord to visit the same prison-house, he says: "Go on, in God's name, in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you; for when I was an undergraduate at Oxford I visited those in the castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully, and my heart and prayers are with you."\*

Samuel Wesley was ordained a priest of the Church of England in 1689, twelve days after the Prince and Princess of Orange were declared by Parliament to be King and Queen of Great Britain. As a proof of his loyalty, he wrote the first defense of the government that appeared after William and Mary's accession. At the time he entered upon his ministerial career, there were in the English Church some of the most distinguished divines that it has ever had: Stillingfleet; Tillotson, whose sermons were regarded as a standard of finished oratory; Thomas Kenn, author of the "Morning and Evening Hymns;" Robert South, William Fleetwood; Gilbert Burnet, author of the "History of the Reformation;" William Beveridge; Daniel Whitby, who, in 1703, published in two volumes folio his "Commentary on the New Testament."

Samuel Wesley's first appointment was a curacy, with an income of £28 a year. He was then appointed chaplain on board a man-of-war, where he began his poem on the Life of Christ.

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\*The Life and Times of Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A.

His ecclesiastical income for these few years' services that he rendered was small, but he increased the amount by his industry and writings. It was while he held such uncertain positions that he married, he and his wife living in lodgings until after the birth of their first-born. The young lady who became his wife was Susanna, the youngest and twenty-fourth child of her mother, and the twenty-fifth child of her father, Dr. Samuel Annesley, one of the leading Non-conformist ministers of London.\*

Susanna Annesley, in person, is said to have been both graceful and beautiful. The accomplishments of her mind were of the highest order, and for womanly virtues she has probably never been surpassed. She became the mother of nineteen children, and was remarkable for her system and success in teaching and training them. "No man," says Southey, "was ever more suitably mated than Samuel Wesley. The wife whom he chose was, like himself, the child of a man eminent among the Non-conformists; and, like himself, in early life she had chosen her own path. . . . She had reasoned herself into Socinianism, from which her husband reclaimed her. She was an admirable woman, an obedient wife, an exemplary mother, and a fervent Christian. The marriage was blessed in all its circumstances; it was contracted in the prime of their youth; it was fruitful; and death did not divide them till they were both full of days."

The mother of Samuel Wesley was the daughter of a distinguished and learned man, John White, a "perpetual fellow" of one of Oxford's oldest colleges. She was the niece of another

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\* He was born in 1620, and closed a useful ministry of fifty-five years in 1696. From his early childhood his heart was set on preaching; and, to qualify himself for that sacred work, he began, when he was only five or six years old, seriously to read the Bible; and such was his ardor that he bound himself to read twenty chapters daily, a practice which he continued to the end of life. At fifteen years of age he went to Oxford, where he took the degree of LL.D. In 1648 he preached the fast-day sermon before the House of Commons, which by order was printed. He had two of the largest congregations in London. Samuel Annesley was of so hale and hardy a constitution as to endure the coldest weather without using either gloves or fire. For many years he seldom drank any thing but water, and, to the day of his death, he could read the smallest print without spectacles. A short time before he died his joy was such that he exclaimed, "I cannot contain it! What manner of love is this to a poor worm? I cannot express the thousandth part of the praise due to Christ. I'll praise thee, and rejoice that there are others that can praise thee better." His last words were: "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness—satisfied, satisfied." (Tyerman.)



man of mark, the celebrated Dr. Thomas Fuller, the Church historian. It is an interesting fact that the father of Susanna Wesley's mother was named John White, also. He entered Oxford at seventeen. In 1640 he was elected Member of Parliament, and joined in all the proceedings which led to the overthrow of the Established Church. He was appointed chairman of the Committee for Religion, and was also a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. In a speech of his, made in the House of Commons and published in 1641, he contends that the office of bishop and presbyter is the same; and that the offices of chancellors, vicars, surrogates, and registrars are all of human origin and ought to be abolished, as being altogether superfluous and of no service to the Church; that episcopacy had been intrusted with the care of souls for more than eighty years; and now, as a consequence, nearly four-fifths of the churches throughout the kingdom were held by idle or scandalous ministers. And what though such ministers be reported to their bishops? The most they got, he said, was a mild reproof; whereas the same bishops were quick-sighted and keen-scented to hunt down any man that preached the true gospel, and to silence or expel him.—These two John Whites do not appear to have been akin to each other, but their blood met in the founder of Methodism.

The first home of Samuel and Susanna Wesley was South Ormsby. Withdrawn from London, and settled down to the seclusion of a small country village, he had ample opportunity to study, read, write, and preach. He was then twenty-eight years old, and his wife was in her twenty-second year, with their infant son Samuel just turned four months old. The rectory-house was little better than a mud-built hut, and in that hovel Samuel Wesley and his noble young wife lived five years. Here the rector's wife brought him one child additional every year, and did her best to make £50 per annum go as far as possible; and here he wrote some of the most able works he ever published. The work by which he is best known was published in 1693, and entitled, "The Life of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A heroic poem in ten books, dedicated to her Most Sacred Majesty Queen Mary." The queen, to whom it was dedicated, conferred on him the living of Epworth, in the county of Lincoln, "without any solicitation on his part, or without his

once thinking of such a favor." The living was in itself a good one, being worth, in the currency of those times, about £200 a year, and Samuel Wesley's family was already large. He was in debt, and the fees necessary to be paid before entering on the living added to his debt. On his tombstone it is inscribed that he was thirty-nine years rector of that parish.

John Wesley was born there, June 17, 1703, and his brother Charles, December 18, 1708. It was a great advantage to have had such an ancestry; the laws of heredity could hardly present a richer and finer combination. Greater still was the advantage of being born and brought up under the influences of the Epworth parsonage. It was a household that seems to have been providentially constituted for preparing chosen instruments. The moral elevation and intellectual vigor of the father and an elder brother, the refining power of variously gifted sisters, the uncommon mother, the honest struggles with poverty, and the opportune openings for such higher education as could not be imparted at home, all conspired to prepare instruments "fit for the kingdom of God."

[This Chapter is compiled from The Wesley Memorial Volume; Memorials of the Wesley Family; Smith's History of Wesleyan Methodism; Taylor's Wesley and Methodism; and Tyerman's Life and Times of Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A.]

## CHAPTER II.

Moral Condition of England at the Rise of Methodism: Causes of It—Testimony of Secular and Religious Writers—The Effect of the Methodist Revival on the Churches; Its Influence on the State.

THE beginning of the Reformation was Justification by Faith; but this truth was, to a lamentable degree, soon lost sight of in the struggle it brought on with the power of popery. Ecclesiastical revolution, more than evangelical revival, occupied men's minds. There was a relapse into formalism, of which the best that could be said was—it was not papal formalism. The Lutheran movement, to its great spiritual disadvantage, was complicated with State-churchism. It lacked gospel discipline. To a deputation from Moravia, urging upon him the necessity of combining scriptural discipline and Christian practice with sound doctrine, Luther replied: "With us things are not sufficiently ripe for introducing such holy exercises in doctrine and practice as we hear is the case with you. Our cause is still in a state of immaturity, and proceeds slowly; but do you pray for us."

This imperfection in the Reformation on the Continent was not lessened by the manner of its introduction into England. That libidinous and cruel monarch, Henry VIII., was probably not much attracted by its spiritual aspect; but he was well pleased with a doctrine that justified him in repudiating the pope. Thus he himself became head of the Established Church in his own realm, and got good riddance of a horde of foreign ecclesiastics hard to govern and greedy of revenues.

The truth of God will make its way even under many and heavy disadvantages. Two years later (1536) an English version of the Bible was first printed; and the doctrines of the Reformation were about this time faithfully preached by Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and other pious ministers. During the short reign of Edward VI. the reformed doctrines obtained extensive influence, and copies of the Scriptures were circulated as freely as the state of learning and the circumstances of the people would allow. Thirty-five editions of the New Testament and fourteen of the complete Bible were printed and published in England during the six years and a half of the young king's reign.



The dawning hope which these propitious circumstances justified was obscured by the death of this prince and the accession of Mary (1553). She restored the papal authority. Hooper, Crammer, Ridley, Latimer, and many others, were burned; and hundreds more perished in loathsome prisons and by various other hardships and tortures.

Mary died, and Elizabeth ascended the throne (1558). Her grand purpose appears to have been to reëstablish the Reformation; and so far as legislation can change the religion of a country, this was accomplished, and the whole form of religion was established substantially as it is found at present in the English Church.\* With the accession of Elizabeth gospel truth was again preached; but on the settlement of the national Church, not a few of the most pious and spiritually-minded of the Protestants were lost to her pulpits, because so many rites and usages, which they deemed remnants of popery, were retained. A high Puseyite authority says: "The Protestant confession was drawn up with the purpose of including Catholics;"† and thus two wrongs were perpetrated: elements of antichristian error were retained, and conscientious followers of Christ were excluded. Notwithstanding this, there was a great circulation of gospel truth, which germinated and produced fruit during that and the following generations.‡

The rapid growth of Puritanism during this reign greatly contributed to the events which afterward occurred. Much popular discontent prevailed with the but partial purification of the Church from papal errors, and Puritanism began its work of protest, reformation, and honest rebellion.

The death of Elizabeth (1603) ended the Tudor dynasty and placed James I., of the house of Stuart, on the throne of England, and brought it and Scotland under the same king. This reign gave the world the present English Bible—an incalculable benefit to the advancement of religion. It also furnished the Book of Sports by royal declaration (1618), for the purpose of

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\* But the depth of this outward change is best seen in the fact that out of nine thousand four hundred beneficed clergymen in the kingdom, only fifteen bishops, twelve archdeacons, fifteen heads of colleges, fifty canons, and eighty parochial priests—in all one hundred and seventy-two persons—quitted their preferments rather than change their religion from the extreme popery of Mary's reign to what is called the thorough Protestantism of that of Elizabeth.

† Oxford Tracts for the Times, No. XC. ‡ George Smith, F.A.S.

promoting Sunday amusements. By this means free and full liberty and encouragement were given for the "dancing of men and women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, May-games, Whitsun-ales, morris-dancers, May-poles, and other sports, after the Church services on Sundays." And his majesty's pleasure was declared to be that the bishops should take measures for constraining the people to conform to these practices.

Charles I. succeeded his father (1625); weak in judgment, passionate in temper, and obstinate in disposition. Like all his family, he was fond of arbitrary government, and had an evident partiality for popery. His queen was a papist. This king found himself an heir to huge debts, and all the embarrassments which royal wants involve. Unskillful in government, he soon became embroiled in difficulties with his Parliament. That typical High-churchman, Archbishop Laud, was his trusted counselor and his chief calamity. Through the piety and energy of the Puritans, and the zeal for Calvinistic tenets with which they now began to be inflamed, the people were to a greater extent than ever hostile to the State Church, and disposed to regard the government which patronized and sustained it as partial and unjust. Laud urged his royal master to exasperating persecutions and conscientiously encouraged his popish proclivities. The civil wars began, and both lost their heads.

The House of Commons was now the government. The Presbyterians were paramount in it, and proceeded to remodel the Church on the plan of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. It was ordered that the Solemn League and Covenant should be taken by all persons above the age of eighteen; and, as this instrument bound all who received it to endeavor to extirpate Episcopal Church government, its enforcement led to the ejection of one thousand six hundred beneficed clergymen from their livings. But if we may rely on the testimony of Burnet, Baxter, and others, all the ejections of the period did not take place on political or sectarian grounds, many having been occasioned by the gross ignorance, shameful neglect of duty, or notorious immorality of the ministers.

Puritanism, with all its virtues, had strong and persistent vices. It early created a High-churchism of its own, and claimed as exclusive scriptural authority for presbytery as its Episcopal antagonists, "the judicious Hooker" and others, have asserted for prelacy. There was, indeed, scarcely any part of ecclesiastical

polity, except prelacy, against which Puritans had inveighed when in subjection that they did not adopt and practice when in power. Milton declares that the men who had preached so earnestly against the avarice and pluralities of bishops and other ministers, as soon as they had the power, began to practice with the most grasping cupidity all the abuses which they had condemned. Those who had pleaded so earnestly for liberty of conscience, and who had deprecated the interference of the civil powers in matters purely religious, now that they were at the helm of affairs, were of another mind.

Oliver Cromwell and the predominant element of the army leaned to Independency, and coming into supreme power he proclaimed and practiced freedom to worship God. The nation was weary of intestine strife; and, without having obtained civil liberty by the bloody struggle, sat down contentedly under his sway, in the enjoyment of religious toleration. The transfer of power from the Presbyterian to the Independent body does not appear to have made any immediate alteration in the organization of the State Church, beyond a device that deprived presbyteries of the right of approving or rejecting ministers. The Protector appointed thirty-eight persons, whom he called "Triers," selected from the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Independents, who were to examine and receive all candidates for the ministry. Their instructions required them to judge whether they could approve every such person, for "the grace of God in him, his holy and unblamable conversation, as also for his knowledge and utterance, able and fit to preach the gospel." Five of these commissioners were sufficient to approve a minister.

The Commonwealth proceeded to prohibit immorality by law. Vice was punished with Draconian severity. Adultery was a capital crime for the first offense. Fornication was punished with three months' imprisonment for the first offense; for the second, with death. Public amusements, from masques in the mansions of the great down to wrestling and grinning matches on village greens, were vigorously attacked. All the May-poles in England were ordered to be hewn down, the play-houses dismantled, the spectators fined, and the actors whipped at the cart's tail. Magistrates dispersed festive meetings, and put fiddlers in the stocks. The external appearance of religion was so rigidly enforced as to be largely productive of hypocrisy.



Under the Commonwealth, Oliver Cromwell extended his country's prowess and wealth. The stern virtues of his Roundheads and Ironsides made themselves felt at home and abroad. Effeminate vice became unfashionable, and much was done during this period to promote and establish a thoroughly Protestant feeling and judgment, and to extend real religion among the people. But the country, at length, became impatient of enduring this government. The people saw that they had only changed an hereditary monarchy for the rule of an absolute governor, and this conviction prepared the way for the Restoration. On the death of Cromwell, his son Richard was declared Lord Protector in his stead; but the reins of power soon fell from his feeble grasp. He retired into private life, and Charles II., eldest son of the late king, was placed on the throne.

One of the most fatal errors ever made in political affairs was committed in the hasty restoration of this monarch. If ordinary caution had been used, the constitutional liberty of the country might have been placed on a firm foundation. But this favorable opportunity was thrown away. Instead of being restored under such guarantees as were calculated to secure the liberty of the subject and the freedom of religion, Charles was placed on the throne with such precipitancy that the event assumed rather the appearance of a triumph of those principles and practices which caused the ruin of his father.

By order of Parliament the Solemn League and Covenant,\* the well-known symbol of Presbyterian ascendancy—which had been taken down from the walls of the House of Commons—was burned by the common hangman; the hangman first tearing the docu-

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\*The Solemn League and Covenant was a contract agreed to by the Scots, in the year 1638. In 1643 it was brought into England; and it was enacted, by a joint ordinance of both Houses of Parliament, "that the League and Covenant should be solemnly taken and subscribed, in all places throughout the kingdom of England and dominion of Wales, by all persons above the age of eighteen." Accordingly, it was signed by most of the members of the two houses of legislature; by all the *Divines* of the *Assembly* then sitting at Westminster, and by a large number of the people in general. Two of the principal vows were: 1. That the party taking and subscribing the Covenant would endeavor to "bring the Churches of God in all the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, and form of Church government, as the [Presbyterian] *Directory* prescribes for worship and catechising." And, 2. That he would "endeavor, without respect of persons, to extirpate popery and prelacy." (Geo. Smith, F.A.S., whose admirable history of England, in the times preceding Methodism, we follow.)

ment into pieces, and then burning the fragments in succession—he all the while lifting up his hands and eyes in pious indignation, until not a shred was left. After a futile (and on the part of the king and court an insincere) effort for a bill of Comprehension, giving to Protestant Non-conformists the same consideration that had been allowed to Romanists or papal Non-conformists in the ecclesiastical scheme of Elizabeth, the Restoration began to bring forth its fruit. The party in power, not satisfied with restoring the expelled bishops and ministers of the Church, proceeded to make direct aggression on the religious and civil liberties of those who differed from them.

The effects of these measures were dreadful. Great numbers were imprisoned; pious persons were driven to meet for worship in solitude and at midnight; and many sought deliverance from such tyranny by emigrating to the American Colonies. A host of conscientious ministers were driven from their churches, and as far as the power of the Crown could effect its object, all classes of Non-conformists were silenced. Men of great learning and religion were turned out of parsonage, glebes, and tithes, and then harried by laws that were a refinement of cruelty. And yet a pitiful picture might be drawn of the clergymen who, twenty years previously, had been expelled from the same churches by the Puritans, when men of learning and religion were in many instances succeeded by “mere rhapsodists and rambles,” “cried up as rare soul-saving preachers.” Not a few venerable and worthy ministers, then expelled by the rough hand of violence, “lingered out their lives, worried, and worn out with fears, anxieties, necessities, rude affronts, and remediless afflictions.” Such a marked retaliation as this had never before been known in the history of the Protestant Church. Hundreds of the men who lately protested against granting toleration were now compelled piteously, but in vain, to beg for liberty of conscience.

The Restoration removed even the appearance of morality. It opened wide the flood-gates of licentiousness and vice. The court became a royal brothel. The play-house became the temple of England. The king was a confirmed voluptuary, and is acknowledged to have been the father of at least eleven children born of seven different countesses, who lived successively with him as mistresses, although he had a queen the whole time who had to meet and mix up with these women at court. In all the relations

of life, public and private, he was unprincipled, profligate, false, and corrupt; whilst, from the example of his debauched and licentious court, public morals contracted a taint which it required little less than a century to obliterate, and which for a time paralyzed the character of the nation. For nearly a generation—during twenty-eight years—the people of England were in this state of religious retrogression. All the influences that were invested with power, and allowed freedom of action on the public mind, were malign in their tendency. Charles II. died (1685) begging forgiveness of his neglected queen, blessing his bastard children, asking for kindness to be shown to his mistresses, and receiving from a popish priest the Romish communion, extreme unction, and a popish pardon.

His brother, the Duke of York, an avowed papist, succeeded to the throne as James II. That he might bring in his own sort and place them in the universities and the courts and the churches, he presented the rare phenomenon of a Roman Catholic king contending for liberty of conscience for all his subjects! To this end he attempted—Stuart-like—to dispense with the laws of the realm by his royal prerogative. The perfidy and pig-headed obstinacy of James II., united with the judicial cruelties that disgraced his brief reign, led to his expulsion. The army, the navy, the Church, and the people, simultaneously abandoned the infatuated monarch, who, finding himself without any support, sought refuge in France.

William and Mary were, in consequence of the abdication of James, raised to the throne; but the nation did not on this occasion repeat the blunder which it had made on the restoration of the Stuarts. Before offering the Prince of Orange the scepter, both Houses waited on him and tendered a Declaration of Rights, which was accepted and became law. By this measure, constitutional liberty was secured; the succession to the throne became limited to Protestant princes; and other alterations of a liberal character followed.

In the year (1689) which followed the accession of William and Mary, an Act was passed which gave toleration to Protestant Dissenters. Yet their accession made another division in the English Church. Many ministers belonging to the High-church party, regarding the hereditary right to the throne as divine and indefeasible, refused to take the oath of allegiance to William,



and were consequently expelled from their offices and livings, under the name of Non-jurors. The Archbishop of Canterbury, four bishops, and about fourteen hundred clergymen, suffered deprivation for this cause. Anne ascended the throne at the death of William (1702). Her reign was distinguished by the military triumphs of Marlborough, and the brilliant wit and raillery of what has been commonly called the Augustan age of literature. George I., of Hanover, great-grandson of James I., succeeded (1714) on the death of Anne. He died of apoplexy, in 1727, whilst traveling with one of his mistresses, the Duchess of Kendal, to Hanover, and was succeeded by his son, George II.

These events placed the country in the civil, political, and religious position in which it was found at the origin of Methodism. Such influences crowded into the history of one hundred and fifty years must have had their effect on the moral character of a people, and should be taken into account in order to the formation of a just idea of the period when Wesley and his helpers began their work. Prelates and other ecclesiastical dignitaries were embroiled in political strife—intense partisans. The majority of the clergy were ignorant, worldly-minded, and many of them scandalized their profession by open immorality; and it may be said, without any breach of charity, that very few, even of the best of them, had correct views respecting the atoning sacrifice of Christ, or understood the nature of the great cardinal doctrine of the Reformation—justification by faith. Arianism and Socinianism, taught by such men as Clarke and Priestley, had become fashionable even among Dissenters. The higher classes laughed at piety, and prided themselves on being above what they called its fanaticism; the lower classes were grossly ignorant, and abandoned to vice.

From the Restoration down to the rise of Methodism, Churchmen and Non-conformists bear concurrent testimony respecting the decayed condition of religion and morals. The pathetic lamentation of Bishop Burnet has often been quoted. He says:

I am now in the seventieth year of my age; and as I cannot speak long in the world in any sort, so I cannot hope for a more solemn occasion than this of speaking with all due freedom, both to the present and to the succeeding ages. Therefore I lay hold on it, to give a free vent to those sad thoughts that lie on my mind both day and night, and are the subject of many secret mournings. I cannot look on without the deepest concern, when I see the imminent ruin hanging over this

Church, and, by consequence, over the whole Reformation. The outward state of things is black enough, God knows; but that which heightens my fears rises chiefly from the inward state into which we are unhappily fallen. I will, in examining this, confine myself to the clergy. Our Ember-weeks are the burden and grief of my life. The much greater part of those who come to be ordained are ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest part of knowledge is that to which they are the greatest strangers; I mean the plainest part of the Scriptures, which they say, in excuse for their ignorance, that their tutors in the universities never mention the reading of to them; so that they can give no account, or at least a very imperfect one, of the contents even of the Gospels. Those who have read some few books, yet never seem to have read the Scriptures. Many cannot give a tolerable account even of the Catechism itself, how short and plain soever. This does often tear my heart.

Burnet complains further of his clergy: "Politics and party eat out among us not only study and learning, but that which is the only thing that is more valuable—a true sense of religion."

Speaking on the subject, Macaulay says: "It is true that at that time (1685) there was no lack in the English Church of ministers distinguished by abilities and learning; but these men were to be found, with scarce a single exception, at the universities, at the great cathedrals, or in the capitol."

And a shrewd critic of the following century remarks on the effect of test-oaths and shifting majorities upon religious integrity: "The great numbers who went through a nominal conversion in order to secure an estate, or to enter a profession, gradually lowered the theological temperature. Sobriety and good sense were the qualities most valued in the pulpit, and enthusiasm and extravagance were those which were most dreaded. The habit of extempore preaching almost died out after Burnet. Tillotson set the example of written discourses, which harmonized better with the cold and colorless theology that prevailed." \*

Natural religion was the favorite study of the clergy—"the darling topic of the age." In the advertisement to his "Analogy Between Religion and the Constitution and Course of Nature," designed to meet the prevalent infidelity, Bishop Butler says:

It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much a subject of inquiry but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and, accordingly, they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.

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\* Lecky: History of England in the Eighteenth Century, Vol. II., Chap. IX

Archbishop Secker, but one year before that which is commemorated as the epoch of Methodism, observes:

Men have always complained of their own times, and always with too much reason. But though it is natural to think those evils the greatest which we feel ourselves, and therefore mistakes are easily made in comparing one age with another, yet in this we cannot be mistaken, that an open and professed disregard for religion is become, through a variety of unhappy causes, the distinguishing character of the present age; that this evil is grown to a great height in the metropolis of the nation; is daily spreading through every part of it; and, bad in itself as any can be, must of necessity bring in all others after it. Indeed, it hath already brought in such dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and such profligate intemperance and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal. Christianity is now ridiculed and railed at with very little reserve, and the teachers of it without any at all.

Dr. Isaac Watts, in his preface to "An Humble Attempt Toward the Revival of Practical Religion" (1731), testifies of the religious declension: "It is a general matter of mournful observation amongst all that lay the cause of God to heart; and, therefore, it cannot be thought amiss for every one to use all just and proper efforts for *the recovery of dying religion in the world.*"

A late writer, not prejudiced in favor of Methodism, admits that when Wesley appeared the Anglican Church was "an ecclesiastical system under which the people of England had lapsed into heathenism, or a state hardly to be distinguished from it;" and that Methodism "preserved from extinction and reënimated the languishing Non-conformity of the last century, which, just at the time of the Methodistic revival, was rapidly in course to be found nowhere but in books."\*

"It was," to use Wesley's own words, "just at the time when we wanted little of filling up the measure of our iniquities, that two or three clergymen of the Church of England began vehemently to call sinners to repentance."

Voltaire did not speak without apparent reason when he predicted that Christianity would be overthrown throughout the world in the next generation. He was struck by the contrast between the English and French pulpits: "Discourses aiming at the pathetic and accompanied with violent gestures would excite laughter in an English congregation. A sermon in France is a long declamation, scrupulously divided into three parts, and

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\* Isaac Taylor: Wesley and Methodism.



delivered with enthusiasm. In England, a sermon is a solid but dry dissertation which a man reads to the people, without gesture and without any particular exaltation of the voice."

A historian of authority, often quoted, after declaring that "in the middle classes a religious revival burst forth," in the first half of the last century, "which changed after a time the whole tone of English society," adds:

But during the fifty years which preceded this outburst we see little save a revolt against religion and against Churches, in either the higher classes or the poor. Of the prominent statesmen of the time, the greater part were unbelievers in any form of Christianity, and distinguished for the grossness and immorality of their lives. Drunkenness and foul talk were thought no discredit to Walpole. A later prime-minister, the Duke of Grafton, was in the habit of appearing at the play with his mistress. Purity and fidelity to the marriage-vow were sneered out of fashion; and Lord Chesterfield, in his letters to his son, instructs him in the art of seduction as a part of a polite education.\*

The secular historians of this period, after their own manner and from their points of view, set the case in a strong light. Lecky, who will hardly be accused of "evangelical" principles, nor counted as a partisan of Methodism, testifies:

Yet cold, selfish, and unspiritual as was the religion of England from the Revolution till the Methodist movement had pervaded the Establishment with its spirit, it was a period that was not without its distinctive excellences.

There was little dogmatic exposition, and still less devotional literature, but the assaults of the deists were met with masterly ability. To this period belong the *Alciphron* of Berkeley, the *Analogy* of Butler, the *Credibility* of the Gospels by Lardner, and the *Evidential* writings of Sherlock, Leslie, and Leland. The clergy of the great cities were often skillful and masculine reasoners. Those of the country discharged the official duties of religion, mixing without scruple in country business and country sports. Their standard was low; their zeal was languid; but their influence, such as it was, was chiefly for good. That in such a society a movement like that of Methodism should have exercised a great power is not surprising. The secret of its success was merely that it satisfied some of the strongest and most enduring wants of our nature which found no gratification in the popular theology, and that it revived a large class of religious doctrines which had been long almost wholly neglected. The utter depravity of human nature, the lost condition of every man who is born into the world, the vicarious atonement of Christ, the necessity to salvation of a new birth, of faith, of the constant and sustaining action of the Divine Spirit upon the believer's soul, are doctrines which in the eyes of the modern Evangelicals constitute at once the most vital and the most influential portions of Christianity; but they are doctrines which, during the greater part of the eighteenth century, were seldom heard from a Church of England pulpit.

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\* Green: *History of the English People*, Vol. IV., Book VIII.

"The splendid victories by land and sea, and the dazzling episodes," in the reign of George II., "must yield," says Lecky, "in real importance to that religious revolution which shortly before had begun by the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitefield. The creation of a large, powerful, and active sect, extending over both hemispheres, and numbering many millions of souls, was but one of its consequences. It also exercised a profound and lasting influence upon the spirit of the Established Church, upon the amount and distribution of the moral forces of the nation, and even upon the course of its political history."

The same author thus describes the teaching of the pulpit "when the new movement began:"

The essential and predominating characteristics of the prevailing theology were the prominence that was given to external morality as distinguished both from dogma and from all the forms of emotion, and the assiduity with which the preachers labored to establish the purely rational character of Christianity. It was the leading object of the skeptics of the time to assert the sufficiency of natural religion. It was the leading object of a large proportion of the divines to prove that Christianity was little more than natural religion accredited by historic proofs and enforced by the indispensable sanctions of rewards and punishments. Beyond a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity and a general acknowledgment of the veracity of the Gospel narratives, they taught little that might not have been taught by disciples of Socrates and Plato. They labored to infuse a higher tone into the social and domestic spheres, to make men energetic in business, moderate in pleasure, charitable to the poor, upright, honorable, and dutiful in every relation of life. While acknowledging the imperfection, they sincerely respected the essential goodness of human nature, dwelt much upon the infallible authority of the moral sense, and explained away or simply neglected all doctrines that conflicted with it. A great variety of causes had led to the gradual evanescence of dogmatic teaching and to the discredit into which strong religious emotions had fallen.\*

At the risk of anticipating a portion of our history, the following remarks of this popular and philosophic historian on Pitt and Wesley are here presented for the light—direct and indirect—which they throw upon the subject:

Under the influence of many adverse circumstances, the standard of morals had been greatly depressed since the Restoration; and in the early Hanoverian period the nation had sunk into a condition of moral apathy rarely paralleled in history. But from about the middle of the eighteenth century a reforming spirit was once more abroad, and a steady movement of moral ascent may be detected. The influence of Pitt in politics and the influence of Wesley and his followers in religion were the earliest and most important agencies in effecting it. In most respects Pitt and Wesley were, it is true, extremely unlike. But with all these differ-

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\*History of England in the Eighteenth Century, Vol. II., Chap. IX.

ences, there was a real analogy and an intimate relation between the work of these two men. The religious and political notions prevailing in the early Hanoverian period were closely connected. The theological conception which looked upon religion as a kind of adjunct to the police-force, which dwelt almost exclusively on the prudence of embracing it, and on the advantages it could confer, and which regarded all spirituality and all strong emotions as fanaticism, corresponded very faithfully to that political system under which corruption was regarded as the natural instrument, and the maintenance of material interests the supreme end of government; while the higher motives of political action were systematically ridiculed and discouraged. By Wesley in the sphere of religion, by Pitt in the sphere of politics, the tone of thought and feeling was changed. It was felt that enthusiasm, disinterestedness, and self-sacrifice had their place in politics; and although there was afterward, for short periods, extreme corruption, public opinion never acquiesced in it again.\*

Green, in his "History of the English People,"† presents with equal clearness the fact that the Wesleyan revival was a necessary condition for purifying political life.

Horace Walpole, whose power ran through three reigns—from Anne to George II.—was the standing representative of political cynicism, of that unbelief in high sentiment and noble aspirations which had followed the crash of Puritanism. In the talk of patriotism and public virtue he saw nonsense. "Men would grow wiser," he said, "and come out of that." Bribery and borough-jobbing were his base of power. Green says:

Rant about ministerial corruption would have fallen flat on the public ear had not new moral forces, a new sense of social virtue, a new sense of religion, been stirring, however blindly, in the minds of Englishmen. The stir showed itself markedly in a religious revival which began in a small knot of Oxford students, whose revolt against the religious deadness of their times expressed itself in ascetic observances, an enthusiastic devotion, and a methodical regularity of life which gained them the nickname of "Methodists." Three figures detached themselves from the group as soon as, on its transfer to London, in 1738, it attracted public attention by the fervor and even extravagance of its piety; and each found his special work in the task to which the instinct of the new movement led it from the first—that of carrying religion and morality to the vast masses of population which lay concentrated in the towns, or around the mines and collieries of Cornwall and the north. Whitefield was, above all, the preacher of the revival. Speech was governing English politics; and the religious power of speech was shown when a dread of "enthusiasm" closed against the new apostles the pulpits of the Established Church and forced them to preach in the fields. Their voice was soon heard in the wildest and most barbarous corners of the land, in the dens of London, or in the long galleries where, in the pauses of his labor, the Cornish miner listens to the sobbing of the sea.

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\* *Ibid.*, Vol. II., Chap. VIII. † Vol. IV., Book VIII.



Such eulogies on Wesley and his co-laborers come late, but are none the less significant. They contrast gratefully with the scurrilous literature that greeted the Founder of Methodism when his work began. The test of Gamaliel has been applied: "But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it;" and historians announce the verdict of a century of facts.

We close the chapter with other quotations from this author, who has studied Wesley and Wesleyanism: "He was older than any of his colleagues at the start, and he outlived them all. His life, indeed, almost covers the century. No man ever stood at the head of a great revolution whose temper was so anti-revolutionary. When Whitefield began his sermons in the fields, Wesley 'could not at first reconcile himself to that strange way.' He fought against the admission of laymen as preachers until he found himself left with none but laymen to preach. He broke with the Moravians who had been the earliest friends of the new movement, when they endangered its safe conduct by their contempt of religious forms. He broke with Whitefield when the great preacher plunged into an extravagant Calvinism. But the same practical temper of mind which led him to reject what was unmeasured, and to be the last to adopt what was new, enabled him at once to grasp and organize the novelties he adopted. He himself became the most unwearied of field-preachers, and his journal for half a century is little more than a record of fresh journeys and fresh sermons. When once driven to employ lay helpers in his ministry, he made their work a new and attractive feature in his system. The great body which he thus founded numbered one hundred thousand at his death, and now counts its members in England and America by millions. But the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the 'Evangelical' movement, which found representatives like Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. A new philanthropy reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave-trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education." 1

### CHAPTER III.

Home Training—Parsonage Life—At School—At the University—Awakenings—Studying Divinity—Predestination—Difficulties About Assurance—Ordination.

LET us return to the Epworth parsonage. Samuel Wesley, the stalwart Churchman, is diligent; never unemployed, never triflingly employed.

Dr. Whitehead says of him: "As a pastor, Samuel Wesley was indefatigable in the duties of his office; a constant preacher, feeding the flock with the pure doctrines of the gospel, according to his ability; diligent in visiting the sick, and administering such advice as their situations required; and attentive to the conduct of all who were under his care; so that every one in his parish became an object of his concern. No strangers could settle within its limits but he presently knew it, and made himself acquainted with them."

He undertook to work the land of the rectory, but was a bad manager, and debts grew faster than crops. His barn fell, his flax got burned. The rector's temper, along with his Tory politics, made him unpopular; his cattle were stabbed in the field, his house-dog was maimed. Once his house was partially burned, and on another occasion was entirely destroyed by fire—whether by accident or incendiarism will never be known.

After a hotly-contested election, Mr. Wesley, for a debt of £30, was put into prison by an unfriendly creditor, where he remained three months, until friends who were able to help came to his relief. "Now I am at rest," he wrote from the prison to the Archbishop of York, "for I am come to the haven where I have long expected to be; and I don't despair of doing good here, and it may be more in this new parish than in my old one." He read prayers daily, and preached on Sundays. He was consoled by the fortitude of his noble wife. Money she had none—not a coin; the household lived on bread and milk, the produce of the Epworth glebe; but she did what she could to help her husband in his strait—she sent him her little articles of jewelry, including her wedding-ring; but these he sent her back, as things far

too sacred to be used in relieving his necessities. "Tis not every one," he wrote again to the archbishop, "who could bear these things; but I bless God my wife is less concerned with suffering them than I am in writing, or than I believe your Grace will be in reading them. Most of my friends advise me to leave Epworth, if ever I should get from hence. I confess I am not of that mind, because I may yet do good here; and it is like a coward to desert my post because the enemy fire thick upon me."

Dr. A. Clarke assures us that Samuel Wesley had a large share of vivacity; that in conversation he was entertaining and instructive, having a rich fund of anecdote, and of witty and wise sayings. There is a grim humor in the way he tells of his debt troubles. His income was £200; but deducting taxes, poor assessments, sub-rents, tenths, procurations, and synodals, the Epworth living brought not more than about £130 a year. Writing to his patron, the archbishop (1701), he details these expenses, and adds:

I have had but three children born since I came hither about three years since, but another coming, and my wife incapable of any business in my family, as she has been for almost a quarter of a year, yet we have but one maid-servant, to retrench all possible expenses. Ten pounds a year I allow my mother, to help to keep her from starving. All which together keeps me necessitous, especially since interest-money begins to pinch me, and I am always called on for money before I make it, and must buy every thing at the worst hand; whereas, could I be so happy as to get on the right side of my income, I should not fear, by God's help, but to live honestly in the world, and to leave a little to my children after me. I think, as 'tis, I could perhaps work it out in time, in half a dozen or half a score years, if my heart should hold so long; but for that, God's will be done!\*

Notwithstanding all these things, Samuel Wesley held on his way. Leaving the care of household and the education of children to his excellent wife, he not only discharged his clerical duties with diligence, but, unchecked by poverty or persecution,

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\* A few days after, another letter followed to the archbishop: "This comes as a rider to the last, by the same post, to bring such news as I presume will not be unwelcome to a person who has so particular a concern for me. Last night my wife brought me a *few* children. There are but *two* yet, a boy and a girl, and I think they are all at present. . . . Wednesday evening my wife and I clubbed and joined stocks, which came but to *six shillings*, to send for coals. Thursday morning I received the *ten pounds*, and at night my wife was delivered. Glory be to God for his unspeakable goodness!"



persevered in a course of literary labor of vast magnitude. Besides a great number of smaller but respectable publications, he dedicated his "Life of Christ," in verse, to Queen Mary; his "History of the Old and New Testaments" to Queen Anne; and his elaborate Latin dissertations on the Book of Job to Queen Caroline—three successive queens of Great Britain. His greatest literary work was "*Dissertationes in Librum Jobi*," a large-size folio book of six hundred pages. He was employed upon this remarkable production for more than five and twenty years, and death found him plodding away at the unfinished task. It is written in Latin, intermixed with innumerable Hebrew and Greek quotations. The list of subscribers for it includes the first characters in the realm—princes, prelates, poets, and philosophers. Pope was intimate with the rector, and in a letter to Swift, soliciting his interest for the book, says of its author: "I call him what he is, a learned man, and I engage you will approve his prose more than you formerly did his poetry." The illustrations, or "sculptures," were numerous, unique, and costly. While the author was giving minute directions about engraving Job's war-horse and the "*Poetica Descriptio Monstri*," the wolf was at his door. The rectory had been rebuilt within a year after it was burned; but the rector was so impoverished that thirteen years afterward his wife declares that the house was still not half furnished, and she and her children had not more than half enough of clothing. This extract from one of her letters tells its own story: "The late Archbishop of York once said to me (when my master was in Lincoln castle), 'Tell me, Mrs. Wesley, whether you ever really wanted bread?' 'My lord,' said I, 'I will freely own to your Grace that, strictly speaking, I never did want bread. But then I had so much care to get it before it was eat, and to pay for it after, as has often made it very unpleasant to me; and I think to have bread on such terms is the next degree of wretchedness to having none at all.'"

The mother of nineteen children, ten of whom were reared to maturity, the wife of a poor clergyman, Mrs. Wesley was placed in circumstances sufficiently trying to call forth all the resources of the greatest and most cultivated Christian mind. And it is not saying too much to add that her resources never failed her. She conducted household affairs with judgment, precision, diligence, and economy. Her children found in her a devoted, talented,

and systematic teacher. When rising into life, her sons as well as daughters had in their mother an able and affectionate counselor, correspondent, and friend. Her most distinguished son, in later years, mentions "the calm serenity with which his mother transacted business, wrote letters, and conversed, surrounded by her thirteen children." She was a woman that lived by rule; she methodized every thing so exactly that to each operation she had a time, and time sufficient to transact all the business of the family. As to the children, their going to rest, rising in the morning, dressing, eating, learning, and exercise, she managed by rule, which was never suffered to be broken unless in case of sickness.

It was not until after her children had reached mature years that the system by which she managed her household was committed to writing. These are some of the principal rules which she says, "I observed in educating my family: "

The children were always put into a regular method of living, in such things as they were capable of, from their birth; as in dressing and undressing, changing their linen, etc. When turned a year old (and some before) they were taught to fear the rod and to cry softly, by which means they escaped abundance of correction which they might otherwise have had; and that most odious noise of the crying of children was rarely heard in the house, but the family usually lived in as much quietness as if there had not been a child among them.

As soon as they were grown pretty strong, they were confined to three meals a day. At dinner their little table and chairs were set by ours, where they could be overlooked; and as soon as they could handle a knife and fork they were set to our table. They were never suffered to choose their meat, but always made to eat such things as were provided for the family.

At six, as soon as family prayer was over, they had their supper; at seven the maid washed them, and, beginning at the youngest, she undressed and got them all to bed by eight, at which time she left them in their several rooms awake, for there was no such thing allowed of in our house as sitting by a child till it fell asleep.

In order to form the minds of children, the first thing to be done is to conquer their will and bring them to an obedient temper. To inform the understanding is a work of time, and must with children proceed by slow degrees, as they are able to bear it; but the subjecting the will is a thing which must be done at once, and the sooner the better, for by neglecting timely correction they will contract a stubbornness and obstinacy which are hardly ever after conquered, and never without using such severity as would be as painful to me as to the child. In the esteem of the world they pass for kind and indulgent whom I call cruel parents, who permit their children to get habits which they know must be afterward broken. Nay, some are so stupidly fond as in sport to teach their children to do things which in awhile after they have severely beaten them for doing. When

a child is corrected it must be conquered; and this will be no hard matter to do if it be not grown headstrong by too much indulgence. And when the will of a child is totally subdued, and it is taught to revere and stand in awe of the parents, then a great many childish follies and inadvertences may be passed by. I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents, till its own understanding comes to maturity, and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind.

Our children were taught, as soon as they could speak, the Lord's Prayer, which they were made to say at rising and bed-time constantly, to which as they grew bigger were added a short prayer for their parents, and some collects, a short catechism, and some portion of Scripture, as their memories could bear. They were very early made to distinguish the Sabbath from other days, before they could well speak or go. They were as soon taught to be still at family prayers, and to ask a blessing immediately after, which they used to do by signs before they could kneel or speak.

They were quickly made to understand they might have nothing they cried for. They were not suffered to ask even the lowest servant for aught without saying, "Pray give me such a thing;" and the servant was chid if she ever let them omit that word.

Taking God's name in vain, cursing and swearing, profanity, obscenity, rude, ill-bred names, were never heard among them; nor were they ever permitted to call each other by their proper names without the addition of brother or sister.

There was no such thing as loud talking or playing allowed of, but every one was kept close to business for the six hours of school. And it is almost incredible what a child may be taught in a quarter of a year by a vigorous application, if it have but a tolerable capacity and good health. Kizzy excepted, all could read better in that time than the most of women can do as long as they live.

For some years we went on very well. Never were children in better order. Never were children better disposed to piety, or in more subjection to their parents, till that fatal dispersion of them after the fire into several families. In those they were left at full liberty to converse with servants, which before they had always been restrained from, and to run abroad to play with any children, good or bad. They soon learned to neglect a strict observance of the Sabbath, and got knowledge of several songs and bad things which before they had no notion of. That civil behavior which made them admired when they were at home by all who saw them was in a great measure lost, and a clownish accent and many rude ways were learnt, which were not reformed without some difficulty.

When the house was rebuilt, and the children all brought home, we entered on a strict reform; and then was begun the custom of singing psalms at beginning and leaving school, morning and evening. Then also that of a general retirement at five o'clock was entered upon, when the oldest took the youngest that could speak, and the second the next, to whom they read the psalms for the day and a chapter in the New Testament—as in the morning they were directed to read the psalms and a chapter in the Old Testament, after which they went to their private prayers, before they got their breakfast or came into the family.



There were several by-laws observed among us.

First. It had been observed that cowardice and fear of punishment often lead children into lying, till they get a custom of it which they cannot leave. To prevent this, a law was made that whoever was charged with a fault of which they were guilty, if they would ingenuously confess it and promise to amend, should not be beaten. This rule prevented a great deal of lying.

Second. That no *sinful* action, as lying, pilfering, disobedience, quarreling, etc., should ever pass unpunished.

Third. That no child should be ever chid or beat twice for the same fault, and that if they amended they should never be upbraided with it afterward.

Fourth. That every signal act of obedience, especially when it crossed upon their own inclinations, should be always commended.

Fifth. That if ever any child performed an act of obedience, or did any thing with an intention to please, though the performance was not well, yet the obedience and intention should be kindly accepted, and the child with sweetness directed how to do better for the future.

Sixth. That propriety be inviolably preserved, and none suffered to invade the property of another in the smallest matter, though it were but of the value of a farthing, or a pin, which they might not take from the owner without, much less against, his consent. This rule can never be too much inculcated on the minds of children; and from the want of parents or governors doing it as they ought proceeds that shameful neglect of justice which we may observe in the world.

The day before a child began to study, the house was set in order, every one's work appointed, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five, which were the school-hours. One day was allowed the pupil to learn his letters, and each of them did in that time know them all except two, who were a day and a half at the task, "for which," she says, "I then thought them very dull." Samuel, who was the first child thus taught, learned the alphabet in a few hours. The day after he was five years old he began to study, and as soon as he knew the letters he proceeded to spell out the first chapter of Genesis. The same method was observed by them all.\*

Book-knowledge was only a part of the course of education embraced by Mrs. Wesley's system. She knew that for the truths of the gospel to find a lodgment in the heart they must be personally and directly applied. For this purpose she ar-

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\*Samuel, the eldest son, was born whilst Mr. Wesley was a curate in London; five other children—all daughters—of whom three died, were born at South Ormsby; and afterward thirteen more were born at Epworth. Of the whole, three boys, Samuel, John, and Charles; and seven girls, Emilia, Susanna, Mary, Mehetabel, Anne, Martha, and Keziah, reached maturity, and were all married, except the last.

rangd a special private conference with each child once in every week. Her own account of this plan is thus expressed: "I take such a portion of time as I can best spare every night to discourse with each child by itself on something that relates to its principal concerns. On Monday I talk with Molly, on Tuesday with Hetty, Wednesday with Nancy, Thursday with Jacky, Friday with Patty, Saturday with Charles, and with Emilia and Sukey together on Sunday." These conversations disclosed to the mother the real thoughts and feelings of her children respecting personal religion.\*

Nearly twenty years afterward, John Wesley, at Oxford, was, by correspondence, inquiring for direction from his mother on the subject of a complete renunciation of the world. Urging his claim for just a little time to be given by her to this point, he says in his letter: "In many things you have interceded for me and prevailed. Who knows but in this too you may be successful? If you can spare me only that little part of Thursday evening which you formerly bestowed upon me in another manner, I doubt not it would be as useful now for correcting my heart as it was then for forming my judgment."

On three several occasions, Samuel Wesley was elected proctor, or convocation man, for the diocese of Lincoln. These attendances at convocation brought upon him an expenditure of £150, which he could ill afford to bear. Being so much in London, he required a curate to supply his place at Epworth. On one occasion, when Wesley returned from London, the parishioners complained that the curate had "preached nothing to his congregation except the duty of paying their debts and behaving well among their neighbors." The complainants added: "We think, sir, there is more in religion than this." The rector replied: "There certainly is; I will hear him myself." The curate was sent for, and was told that he must preach next Lord's-day, the rector at the same time saying: "I suppose you can prepare a sermon upon any text I give you." "Yes, sir," replied the ready curate. "Then," said Wesley, "prepare a sermon on Hebrews xi. 6, 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.'" The time arrived, and the text being read with great solemnity, the curate began his brief sermon, by saying: "Friends, faith is a most excellent virtue, and it produces other virtues also. In par-

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\*Stevenson's Memorials of the Wesley Family.

ticular, it makes a man pay his debts;" and thus he fell into the worn rut and kept on to the end.

It is not likely that the ministry of such a man would satisfy the enlightened mind and religious heart of Susanna Wesley; nor is it to be wondered at that she should try to supply its defects by reading to her children and to her neighbors, on Sunday evenings, the best sermons to be found in her husband's library. The congregations of the rector's wife were probably larger than those of the rector's curate. Inman heard of these gatherings, and wrote the rector, complaining that Mrs. Wesley, in his absence, had turned the parsonage into a conventicle; that the Church was likely to be scandalized by such irregular proceedings, and that they ought not to be tolerated. Mr. Wesley wrote to his wife; and an extract from her reply gives us a hint of his objections and a history of her irregular way of doing good:

I heartily thank you for dealing so plainly and faithfully with me in a matter of no common concern. The main of your objections against our Sunday evening meetings are, first, that it will look particular; secondly, my sex.

As to its looking particular, I grant it does; and so does almost every thing that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God or the salvation of souls, if it be performed out of a pulpit, or in the way of common conversation; because in our corrupt age the utmost care and diligence have been used to banish all discourse of God or spiritual concerns out of society, as if religion were never to appear out of the closet, and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of professing ourselves to be Christians. To your second, I reply that as I am a woman so I am also mistress of a large family. And though the superior charge of the souls contained in it lies upon you, as head of the family, and as their minister, yet in your absence I cannot but look upon every soul you leave in my care as a talent committed to me, under a trust, by the great Lord of all the families of heaven and earth. I thought it my duty to spend some part of the day in reading to and instructing my family, especially in your absence, when, having no afternoon service, we have so much leisure for such exercises; and such time I esteem spent in a way more acceptable to God than if I had retired to my own private devotions. This was the beginning of my present practice; other people coming in and joining with us was purely accidental. Our lad told his parents—they first desired to be admitted; then others who heard of it begged leave also. I chose the best and most awakening sermons we had. Last Sunday, I believe, we had above two hundred hearers, and yet many went away for want of room. We banish all temporal concerns from our society; none is suffered to mingle any discourse about them with our reading and singing. We keep close to the business of the day, and as soon as it is over they all go home. And where is the harm of this? As for your proposal of letting some other person read, alas! you do not consider what a people these are. I do not think one man among them could read a sermon without spelling a good part of it; and how would that edify the rest? . . . . If you



do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you *desire* me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience; but send me your *positive command*, in such full and express terms as may absolve me from all guilt and punishment, for neglecting this opportunity of doing good, when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It has been well remarked that when, in this characteristic letter, she said, "Do not tell me that you desire me to do it, but send me your positive command," Susanna Wesley was bringing to its place a corner-stone of the future Methodism. John and Charles Wesley were present at these irregular meetings—the first Methodist meetings ever held—Charles a child of four years old, and John a boy of nine.

On February 9, 1709, at midnight, when all the family were in bed, Samuel Wesley was startled by a cry of fire, out-of-doors. His wife and her eldest daughters rose as quickly as possible. He then burst open the nursery door, where in two beds were sleeping five of his children and their nurse. The nurse seized Charles, the youngest, and bid the others follow. Three of the children did as they were bidden; but John (six years old) was left sleeping. The wind drove the flames inward with such violence that egress seemed impossible. Some of the children now escaped through the windows, and the rest through a little door into the garden. Mrs. Wesley was not in a condition either to climb to the windows or get to the garden door; and, ill clad as she was, she was compelled to force her way to the main entrance through the fury of the flames, which she did, suffering no further harm than scorching.

When Mr. Wesley was counting heads to see if all his family were safe, he heard a cry issuing from the nursery, and found that John was wanting. He attempted to ascend the stairs, but they were all on fire, and were insufficient to bear his weight. Finding it impossible to render help, he knelt down and commended the soul of his child to God. Meanwhile the child had mounted a chest which stood near the window, and a person in the yard saw him, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another seeing there was no time for that, proposed to fix himself against the wall, and that a lighter man should be set upon his shoulders. This was done—the child was pulled through the window; and, at the same instant, the roof fell with a fearful crash, but fortunately fell inward, and thus the two men and the rescued child were saved from perishing. When the child

was taken to an adjoining house, the devout rector cried: "Come, neighbors, let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God; he has given me all my eight children; let the house go; I am rich enough." The memory of his deliverance, on this occasion, is preserved in one of John's early portraits, which has below the head, the representation of a house in flames, with the motto, "Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?"\*

The rector writes: "When poor Jackey was saved, I could not believe it till I had kissed him two or three times. My wife asked, 'Are your books safe?' I told her it was not much, now she and the rest were preserved alive. Mr. Smith, of Gainsborough, and others, have sent for some of my children. I had finished my alterations in the 'Life of Christ' a little while since, and transcribed three copies of it; but all is lost. God be praised! I hope my wife will recover and not miscarry, but God will give me my nineteenth child. When I came to her her lips were black. I did not know her. Some of the children are a little burned, but not hurt or disfigured. I only got a small blister on my hand. The neighbors send us clothes, for it is cold without them."

Mr. and Mrs. Wesley, aware of their inability to lay up fortunes for their children, resolved that they should enjoy the advantages of education. The daughters were well instructed by their mother; and their three sons were all graduates of the University of Oxford. Samuel Wesley, junior, was educated at Westminster School; and in 1711 was elected to Christchurch, Oxford, where he took his degree. He was eminent for his learning, and was an excellent poet, with great power of satire, and

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\* Because of this narrow escape, his mother's mind appears to have been drawn out with unusual earnestness in concern for John. One of her written meditations, when he was eight years old, shows how much her heart was engaged in forming his mind for religion. This is the meditation: "Evening, May 17th, 1711. Son *John*. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his mercies? The little unworthy praise that I can offer is so mean and contemptible an offering that I am even ashamed to tender it. But, Lord, accept it for the sake of Christ, and pardon the deficiency of the sacrifice. I would offer thee myself, and all that thou hast given me; and I would resolve—O give me grace to do it!—that the residue of my life shall be devoted to thy service. And I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavor to instill into his mind the principles of thy true religion, and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success!"

an elegant wit. He held a considerable rank among the literary men of the day.\*

As a High-churchman, he greatly disapproved of the conduct of his brothers when they began to itinerate. He also objected to the doctrines they preached. Probably the last letter written by his trenchant pen was in reply to one sent him from Bristol by his brother, dated May 10th, 1739, in which he gives instances of instantaneous conversion resulting from his preaching in that city. Doubting Samuel wrote to John: "I must ask a few more questions. Did these agitations ever begin during the use of any collects of the Church, or during the preaching of any sermon that had been preached within consecrated walls without that effect, or during the inculcating any other doctrine besides that of your new birth?"

Charles was sent to Westminster School in the year 1716, being then eight years of age. John had then been about two years at the Charterhouse School in London. At Westminster, Charles was placed under the care of his brother Samuel, who was one of the ushers in that establishment, and, for a time, bore the expense of Charles's maintenance and education. Samuel made him an excellent classical scholar and a "Churchman."

When John was at the Charterhouse, the elder boys were accustomed, in addition to their other tyranny, to take the portions of animal food provided for the younger scholars. In consequence of this he was limited for a considerable time to a small daily portion of bread as his only solid food. There was one thing, however, which contributed to his general flow of health, and to the establishment of his constitution; and that was his invariable attention to a strict command of his father that he should run round the Charterhouse garden, which was of considerable extent, three times every morning.

From early childhood he was remarkable for his sober and studious disposition, and seemed to feel himself answerable to his reason and conscience for every thing he did. Such was his consistency of conduct that his father admitted him to the com-

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\*In 1736 he published a quarto volume of poetry. Among these pieces we have a paraphrase on Isaiah xl. 6-8, occasioned by the death of a young lady, and which is found in the hymn-books, beginning, "The morning flowers display their sweets." He was also the author of, "The Lord of Sabbath let us praise;" "Hail, God the Son, in glory crown'd;" "Hail, Holy Ghost, Jehovah, third;" "The Sun of righteousness appears," etc.



munion-table when he was only eight years old. Between the age of eight and nine the small-pox attacked him. At the time his father was in London, and his mother writing him remarks: "Jack has borne his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without complaint." The great privilege of being a Charterhouse scholar he owed to a nobleman's friendship for his father. There he remained six years, making such progress that in 1720 he was elected on this foundation to Christchurch, Oxford, one of the noblest colleges in that illustrious seat of learning; and here he continued until after his ordination in 1725. In reference to this period he writes: "I still said my prayers, both in public and private, and read with the Scriptures several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually and, for the most part, very contentedly in some or other known sin—though with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the holy communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year."

He often struggled with financial difficulty, and more than once, when requesting his sisters to write to him, playfully remarks that though he was "so poor," he "would be able to spare the postage for a letter now and then." The £40 per annum which belonged to him as a Charterhouse scholar was barely sufficient to meet all the expenses of a young Oxford student of that day. His financial embarrassments are often and painfully referred to in the family correspondence.

From the age of eleven to twenty-one, John Wesley's religious experience seems to have suffered much loss. He was now the gay and sprightly young man, with a turn for wit and humor. He had already begun to amuse himself occasionally with writing verses, some in a vein of trifling elegance, others either imitations or translations of the Latin. Once, however, he wrote an imitation of the sixty-fifth Psalm, which he sent to his father, who said: "I like your verses on the sixty-fifth Psalm, and would not have you bury your talent."

Of his steadfastness in orthodox views there can be no doubt. Infidelity was all abroad, even in his college; but it seems not to have touched him. Occasionally the leaven of Pharisaism wrought in him, but he had in him nothing of the vulgar, materialistic Sadducee. His faculty of belief was sound and soundly

exercised. Conscience, however tender, was never allowed to intrude into the office of judgment. The patience and fairness with which he inquired into, and reported, many things made the impression on some that he believed them all.\*

There is no evidence that when John Wesley went to Oxford he intended to become a minister of the Established Church. He might intend to devote himself, like his brother Samuel, to tutorship; or he might contemplate some other mode of maintenance. Certain it is that it was not until about the beginning of 1725, when he had been more than four years at college, that he seems to have been seriously exercised on the subject. The thought of obtaining ordination gave an abrupt turn to his stud-

\*The ghost-story has entered into all Wesleyan biographies. It was during John's residence at the Charterhouse that mysterious noises were heard in Epworth rectory. The often told story need not be repeated; but there can be no question that the Charterhouse youth was impressed. He took the trouble of obtaining minute particulars from his mother, and his four sisters, and others, competent witnesses. The learned Priestley obtained the family letters and journals relating to these curious facts, and gave them to the world as the best authenticated and best told story of the kind extant. They call to mind things described by Cotton Mather, in the witchcraft of New England. Sometimes moans were heard, as from a person dying; at others, it swept through the halls and along the stairs, with the sound of a person trailing a loose gown on the floor; the chamber walls, meanwhile, shook with vibrations. Before "Jeffrey" (as the children called it) came into any room, the latches were frequently lifted up, and the windows clattered. It seemed to clap the doors, draw the curtains, and throw the man-servant's shoes up and down. Once it threw open the nursery door. The mastiff barked violently at it the first day, yet whenever it came afterward he ran off whining, to shelter himself. These noises continued about two months, and occurred, the latter part of the time, every day. The family soon came to consider them amusing freaks, as they were never attended with any serious harm; they all, nevertheless, deemed them preternatural. Adam Clarke believed them to be demoniacal. It was evidently, says Southey, a Jacobite goblin, and seldom suffered Mr. Wesley to pray for the Hanover king without disturbing the family. John says it gave "thundering knocks" at the Amen, and the loyal rector, waxing angry at the insult, sometimes repeated the prayer with defiance. Priestley supposed them a trick of the servants. Isaac Taylor thinks that the strange Epworth episode so laid open Wesley's faculty of belief that ever after a right-of-way for the supernatural was opened through his mind to the end of life. Southey argues that such occurrences have a tendency to explode the fine-spun theories of materialists who deny another state of being, and to bring men to the conclusion that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in their philosophy. Tyerman says: "We have little doubt that the Epworth noises deepened and most powerfully increased Wesley's convictions of the existence of an unseen world, and, in this way, exercised an important influence on the whole of his future life."

ies and his manner of life. He consulted his parents, and both gave characteristic advice. His father, beginning thus, "As to what you mention of entering into holy orders, it is indeed a great work, and I am pleased to find you think it so," hints that in his judgment it was rather too early for his son to take that solemn obligation on him, and advises that he perfect himself in Hebrew, etc. His mother urges her son "to greater application in the study of *practical* divinity, which, of all other studies, I humbly conceive to be the best for candidates for orders," and concludes by saying that she had noticed of late an alteration in his temper, and trusted that it might proceed from the operations of the Holy Ghost. She exhorts him:

And now, in good earnest, resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, that is the one thing which, strictly speaking, is necessary; all things beside are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains; if you have not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in a tragedy.

This excellent advice was not lost upon him; and, indeed, his mother's admirable letters were among the principal means, under God, of producing that still more decided change in his views which soon afterward began to display itself. The young scholar threw his whole strength into his work, and devoted himself with intense diligence to the study of practical divinity, giving special attention to those books which were likely to guide him to a sound judgment in spiritual matters, and to lead his affections toward God. With this view he carefully studied Thomas à Kempis on "The Imitation of Christ," Bishop Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living and Dying," and William Law's "Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life." From these impressive books he learned that true religion does not consist in orthodox opinions, nor in correct moral conduct, nor in conformity to the purest modes of worship, necessary as these things are in their place; but in the possession and exercise of the mind that was in Christ. He was anxious, beyond expression, to attain inward and outward holiness as the great end of his being. Wesley writes:

I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, angry at Kempis for being too strict; though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was



an utter stranger to before. Meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at, and to pray for, inward holiness. So that now, doing so much and living so good a life, I doubted not that I was a good Christian.

In reference to Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," he observes:

In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God—all my thoughts, and words, and actions—being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself—that is, in effect, the devil.

But some of Taylor's opinions provoked the dissent of the devout student, and led him more definitely to doctrines which were to be vital in the theology of Methodism. The Bishop, in common with most theologians of his day, denied that the Christian could usually know his acceptance with God. Wesley replied: "If we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us (which he will not do unless we are regenerate), certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling; and then, undoubtedly, in this life we are of all men most miserable."

He is feeling after the doctrine of assurance. His mother, to whom his difficulties were stated, omits to afford him any assistance on the point of the possibility of obtaining a comfortable persuasion of being in a state of salvation, through the influence of the Holy Spirit; which he supposed to be the privilege of a real believer, though as yet he was greatly perplexed as to the means of attaining it. She says:

I do n't well understand what he [Taylor] means by saying, "Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not." If he intends such a certainty of pardon as cannot possibly admit of the least doubt or scruple, he is infallibly in the right; for such an absolute certainty we can never have till we come to heaven. But if he means no more than that reasonable persuasion of the forgiveness of sins, which a true penitent feels when he reflects on the evidences of his own sincerity, he is certainly in the wrong, for such a firm persuasion is actually enjoyed by a man in this life. The virtues which we have by the grace of God acquired are not of so little force as he supposes; for we may surely perceive when we have them in any good degree.

Mother and son had not yet distinguished between the witness of our own spirit and the witness of the Spirit itself. In his re-

ply he makes the important distinction between assurance of present and assurance of future salvation; by confounding which, so many, from their objection to the Calvinistic notion of the infallible perseverance of the saints, have given up the doctrine of assurance altogether:

That we can never be so certain of the pardon of our sins as to be assured they will never rise up against us, I firmly believe. We know that they will infallibly do so if ever we apostatize; and I am not satisfied what evidence there can be of our final perseverance till we have finished our course. But I am persuaded we may know if we are now in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised in the Holy Scriptures to our sincere endeavors; and we are surely able to judge of our own sincerity.

The latter part of this extract will, however, show how much he had yet to learn in Methodist theology.

On the witness of the Spirit he is not so clear as he is in his dissent from the tenet of "final perseverance." The time approaches for ordination, and he is naturally exercised over the article on predestination. He wrote:

As I understand faith to be an assent to any truth upon rational grounds, I do not think it possible, without perjury, to swear I believe any thing unless I have reasonable grounds for my persuasion. Now, that which contradicts reason cannot be said to stand upon reasonable grounds; and such, undoubtedly, is every proposition which is incompatible with the divine justice or mercy. What, then, shall I say of predestination? If it was inevitably decreed from eternity that a determinate part of mankind should be saved, and none besides, then a vast majority of the world were only born to eternal death, without so much as a possibility of avoiding it. How is this consistent with either divine justice or mercy? Is it merciful to ordain a creature to everlasting misery? Is it just to punish a man for crimes which he could not but commit? That God should be the author of sin and injustice, which must, I think, be the consequence of maintaining this opinion, is a contradiction to the clearest ideas we have of the divine nature and perfections.

His mother confirmed him in these views, and expressed her abhorrence of the Calvinistic theology. Meanwhile she tried to solve some of his scruples respecting the article on predestination; and wrote him a long letter, from which we give the following extracts:

. . . Such studies tend more to confound than to inform the understanding, and young people had better let them alone. But since I find you have some scruples concerning our article, Of Predestination, I will tell you my thoughts of the matter. If they satisfy not, you may desire your father's direction, who is surely better qualified for a casuist than I.

The doctrine of predestination, as maintained by the rigid Calvinists, is very shocking, and ought to be abhorred, because it directly charges the Most High God with being the author of sin. I think you reason well and justly against it; for it

is certainly inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God to lay any man under either a physical or moral necessity of committing sin, and then to punish him for doing it. I firmly believe that God, from eternity, has elected some to eternal life; but then I humbly conceive that this election is founded on his foreknowledge, according to Romans viii. 29, 30. Whom, in his eternal prescience, God saw would make a right use of their powers, and accept of offered mercy, he did predestinate and adopt for his children. And that they may be conformed to the image of his only Son, he calls them to himself, through the preaching of the gospel, and, internally by his Holy Spirit; which call they obeying, repenting of their sins and believing in the Lord Jesus, he justifies them, absolves them from the guilt of all their sins, and acknowledges them as just and righteous persons, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. And having thus justified, he receives them to glory—to heaven.

This is the sum of what I believe concerning predestination, which I think is agreeable to the analogy of faith; since it does in nowise derogate from the glory of God's free grace, nor impair the liberty of man. Nor can it with more reason be supposed that the prescience of God is the cause that so many finally perish than that our knowing the sun will rise to-morrow is the cause of its rising.

John Wesley substantially adopted these predestinarian views, as may be seen in his sermon on the text expounded in the foregoing letter; but his notions of that faith by which a sinner is justified were, at present, far from being clear.

The time for his ordination was now at hand, and the money question required attention. His father writes: "I will assist you in the charges for ordination, though I am myself just now struggling for life. The £8 you may depend on this next week, or the week after." And John Wesley was ordained deacon, September 19, 1725.

[The materials of this Chapter are drawn chiefly from Whitehead's *Life of Wesley*; Stevens's *History of Methodism*; and Tyerman's *Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*]



## CHAPTER IV.

The Fellowship—His Father's Curate—Cutting Off Acquaintances—Charles Awakened—The Holy Club—Whitefield and Other Members—Original Methodists—What Lack I Yet?

SIX months after his ordination, one of the fellowships of Lincoln College being vacant, Wesley became a candidate for it. His previous seriousness had been the subject of much banter and ridicule, and appears to have been urged against him in the election by his opponents; but his reputation for learning and diligence, and the excellence of his character, triumphed. Here again money was wanted to bear the expenses of installation, and the father, as usual, strained himself to help. The academic distinction achieved was most gratifying to the family, and the substantial income attached to the fellowship put an end to his wants. Wesley hereafter could maintain himself comfortably, and help others also. Henceforth, he said, he "was entirely free from worldly cares, for his income was ready for him on stated days, and all he had to do was to count it and carry it home." His mother, with a full heart, thanked Almighty God for his "good success;" and his exultant father wrote:

DEAR MR. FELLOW ELECT OF LINCOLN: I have done more than I could for you. The last £12 pinched me so hard that I am forced to beg time of your brother Sam till after harvest, to pay him the £10 that you say he lent you. Nor shall I have as much as that, perhaps not £5, to keep my family till after harvest; and I do not expect that I shall be able to do any thing for Charles when he goes to the university. What will be my own fate God only knows. *Sed passi graviora*. Wherever I am, my Jack is fellow of Lincoln.

His literary character was now established at the university. All parties acknowledged him to be a man of talents and of learning; while his skill in logic was known to be remarkable. The result was that though he was only in the twenty-third year of his age, he was, in November following, elected Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes.

Wesley, about this period, undertook to rid himself of unprofitable acquaintances. He writes:

When it pleased God to give me a settled resolution to be not a *nominal* but a *real* Christian (being then about twenty-two years of age), my acquaint-

ance were as ignorant of God as myself. But there was this difference—I knew my own ignorance; they did not know theirs. I faintly endeavored to help them, but in vain. Meantime I found, by sad experience, that even their *harmless* conversation, so called, damped all my good resolutions. I saw no possible way of getting rid of them unless it should please God to remove me to another college. He did so, in a manner utterly contrary to all human probability. I was elected fellow of a college [Lincoln] where I knew not one person. I foresaw abundance of people would come to see me, either out of friendship, civility, or curiosity; and that I should have offers of acquaintance new and old; but I had now fixed my plan. I resolved to have no acquaintance, y chance, but by choice; and to choose such only as would help me on my way to heaven. In consequence of this, I narrowly observed the temper and behavior of all that visited me. I saw no reason to think that the greater part of these truly loved or feared God; therefore, when any of them came to see me, I behaved as courteously as I could; but to the question, “When will you come to see me?” I returned no answer. When they had come a few times, and found I still declined returning the visit, I saw them no more. And I bless God this has been my invariable rule for about three-score years. I knew many reflections would follow, but that did not move me, as I knew full well it was my calling to go through evil report and good report.

He laid down a severe and systematic course of study, took pupils, wrote sermons, kept fast-days, and was much in prayer. The rector of Epworth became less able than formerly to attend to the duties of his parish, and earnestly desired his son John to assist him as his curate. He complied with his father’s wishes, and left Oxford for this purpose in August, 1727; and only for priest’s orders and Master’s degree did he visit Oxford during the next two years. He labored diligently.

What were the results? Wesley himself shall tell us: “I preached much, but saw no fruit of my labor. Indeed, it could not be that I should; for I neither laid the foundation of repentance nor of believing the gospel; taking it for granted that all to whom I preached were believers, and that many of them needed no repentance.” Meanwhile Charles, five years his junior, had been elected to Christchurch College, and entered it about the time John left it. For some months after his arrival in Oxford, though very agreeable in his spirit and manners, he was far from being earnest in his application to study; the strict authority over him which his brother Samuel exercised, as his tutor and guardian, being now withdrawn. He says: “My first year at college I lost in diversions; the next I set myself to study.” “He pursued his studies diligently,” says John, “and led a regular, harmless life; but if I spoke to him about religion, he would

warmly answer, 'What, would you have me to be a saint-all at once?' and would hear no more."\*

Such was the state of the two brothers when John left Oxford to become his father's curate. But soon after that event, and apparently without the intervention of any particular means, Charles Wesley also became deeply serious, and earnestly desired to be a spiritual worshiper of God. Believing that the keeping of a diary would further his designs, and knowing that his brother had kept such a record for some years, he wrote to him, requesting his advice:

I would willingly write a diary of my actions, but do not know how to go about it. What particulars am I to take notice of? . . . . If you would direct me to the same or like method to your own I would gladly follow it, for I am fully convinced of the usefulness of such an undertaking. I shall be at a stand till I hear from you. . . . I firmly believe that God will establish what he hath begun in me; and there is no one person I would so willingly have to be the instrument of good to me as you. It is owing, in great measure, to somebody's prayers (my mother's, most likely) that I am come to think as I do; for I cannot tell myself how or when I awoke out of my lethargy; only that it was not long after you went away.†

This letter was written in the beginning of 1729.

No sooner had Charles Wesley become devout than he longed to be useful to those about him. He began to attend the weekly sacrament, and induced two or three other students to attend with him. The regularity of their behavior led a young collegian to call them Methodists; and "as the name was new and quaint, it clave to them immediately, and from that time all that had any connection with them were thus distinguished."‡

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\* The Oxford Methodists. † The Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley, A.M. (The name was in use in England long before it was applied to Wesley and his friends.) In 1693 a pamphlet was published with the title, "A War among the Angels of the Churches: wherein is shewed the Principles of the New Methodists in the great point of Justification. By a Country Professor of Jesus Christ." And even as early as 1639, in a sermon preached at Lambeth, the following perfumed eloquence occurs: "Where are now our Anabaptists, and plain, pack-staff Methodists, who esteem all flowers of rhetoric in sermons no better than stinking weeds, and all elegance of speech no better than profane spells?" Wesley's own definition, as found in his Dictionary, published in 1753: "A Methodist—one that lives according to the method laid down in the Bible." "The name of Methodist," it is observed by one of Wesley's correspondents, "is not a new name never before given to any religious people. Dr. Calamy, in one of his volumes of the ejected ministers, observes, They called those who stood up for God, Methodists."



The duties of his fellowship recalled John from the country late in 1729, and the rector of Lincoln put eleven pupils under his care immediately. "In this employ," he says, "I continued till 1735, when I went as a *missioner* to Georgia." On his return to Oxford he naturally took the lead of the little band of Methodists. They rallied round him at once, feeling his fitness to direct them. He was their master-spirit, and soon compacted the organization and planned new methods of living and working. The first Methodists were the two Wesleys, with Robert Kirkham and William Morgan. To these were subsequently added Whitefield, Clayton, Broughton, Ingham, Hervey, White-lamb, Hall, Gambold, Kinchin, Smith, Salmon, Wogan, Boyce, Atkinson, and others. Some of them made history. John Gambold became a Moravian bishop, but like the leaders of the Holy Club, it was not until after years of laborious endeavor to establish a righteousness of his own that he was led to submit to "the righteousness of God, by faith of Jesus Christ." He gives an original and inside view of the organization:

About the middle of March, 1730, I became acquainted with Mr. Charles Wesley of Christ College. I was just then come up from the country, and had made a resolution to find out some pious persons to keep company with. I had been, for two years before, in deep melancholy. No man did care for my soul; or none at least understood its paths. One day an old acquaintance entertained me with some reflections on the whimsical Mr. Wesley, his preciseness and pious extravagances. Upon hearing this, I suspected he might be a good Christian. I therefore went to his room, and without any ceremony desired the benefit of his conversation. I had so large a share of it henceforth that hardly a day passed, while I was at college, but we were together once, if not oftener. After some time he introduced me to his brother John, of Lincoln College. "For," said he, "he is somewhat older than I, and can resolve your doubts better." This, as I found afterward, was a thing which he was deeply sensible of; for I never observed any person have a more real deference for another than he constantly had for his brother. . . I shall say no more of Charles, but that he was a man made for friendship; who, by his cheerfulness and vivacity, would refresh his friend's heart; and by a habit of openness and freedom, leave no room for misunderstanding.

The Wesleys were already talked of for some religious practices, which were first occasioned by Mr. Morgan, of Christchurch. From these combined friends began a little society; for several others, from time to time, fell in; most of them only to be improved by their serious and useful discourse; and some few espousing all their resolutions and their whole way of life.

Mr. John Wesley was always the chief manager, for which he was very fit; for he not only had more learning and experience than the rest, but he was blest with such activity as to be always gaining ground, and such steadiness that he lost none. What proposals he made to any were sure to charm them, because he was so much

in earnest; nor could they afterward slight them, because they saw him always the same. To this I may add that he had, I think, something of authority in his countenance; though, as he did not want address, he could soften his manner, and point it as occasion required.

It was their custom to meet most evenings either at his chamber or one of the others, where, after some prayers (the chief object of which was charity), they ate their supper together, and he read some book. But the chief business was to review what each had done that day, in pursuance of their common design, and to consult what steps were to be taken the next. Their undertaking included several particulars: To converse with young students, to visit the prisons, to instruct some poor families, and to take care of a school and a parish work-house.

They took great pains with the younger members of the university, to rescue them from bad company, and encourage them in a sober, studious life. If they had some interest with any such, they would get them to breakfast, and over a dish of tea, endeavor to fasten some good hint. For some years past he and his friends read the New Testament together at evening. After every portion of it, having heard the conjectures the rest had to offer, he made his observations on the phrase, design, and difficult places. One or two wrote these down from his mouth. He laid much stress upon self-examination. He taught them to take account of their actions in a very exact manner by writing a constant diary. Then, to keep in their minds an awful sense of God's presence, with a constant dependence on his help, he advised them to ejaculatory prayers. They had a book of Ejaculations relating to the chief virtues, and, lying by them as they stood at their studies, they at intervals snatched a short petition out of it. But at last, instead of that variety, they contented themselves with the following aspirations (containing acts of faith, hope, love, and self-resignation at the end of every hour): "Consider and hear me," etc. The last means he recommended was meditation. Their usual time for this was the hour next before dinner. After this he committed them to God. What remained for him to do was to encourage them in the discomforts and temptations they might feel, and to guard them against all spiritual delusions. In this spiritual care of his acquaintance, Mr. Wesley persisted amidst all discouragements. He overlooked not only one's absurd or disagreeable qualities, but even his coldness and neglect of him, if he thought it might be conquered. He helped one in things out of religion, that he might be more welcome to help him in that. His knowledge of the world and his insight into physic were often of use to us.

(A meditative piety did not cover the whole ground of the Oxford Methodists. They studied how to do good in the prisons and among the poor.) Doubtless methods and their results were often discussed. Gambold continues his account:

When a new prisoner came, their conversation with him for four or five times was particularly close and searching. Whether he bore no malice toward those that did prosecute him, or any others? The first time, after professions of goodwill, they only inquired of his circumstances in the world. Such questions imported friendship, and engaged the man to open his heart. Afterward they entered upon such inquiries as most concern a prisoner: Whether he submitted to

this disposal of Providence; whether he repented of his past life; last of all they asked him whether he constantly used private prayer, and whether he had ever communicated. Thus, most or all the prisoners were spoken to in their turns. But, if any one was either under sentence of death, or appeared to have some intentions of a new life, they came every day to his assistance; and partook in the conflict and suspense of those who should now be found able, or not able, to lay hold on salvation. In order to release those who were confined for small debts, and were bettered by their affliction, and likewise to purchase books, physic, and other necessities, they raised a small fund, to which many of their acquaintance contributed quarterly. They had prayers at the Castle most Wednesdays and Fridays, a sermon on Sundays, and the Sacrament once a month. When they undertook any poor family, they saw them at least once a week; sometimes gave them money, admonished them of their vices, read to them, and examined their children. The school was, I think, of Mr. Wesley's own setting up. At all events, he paid the mistress and clothed some, if not all, of the children. When they went thither they inquired how each child behaved, saw their work (for some could knit and spin), heard them read, heard them their prayers and catechism, and explained part of it. In the same manner they taught the children in the work-house, and read to the old people as they did to the prisoners.

Though some practices of Mr. Wesley and his friends were much blamed, they seldom took any notice of the accusations brought against them; but if they made any reply it was commonly such a plain and simple one as if there was nothing more in the case, but that they had heard such doctrines of their Saviour, and believed and done accordingly.

In August, 1732, Wesley was made a member of "The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge;" and during his stay in London, received from Clayton a long letter, a few sentences from which will help to give the reader an insight into the prison-work of the Oxford Methodists:

All the felons were acquitted, except Salmon, who is to be tried at Warwick; and the sheep-stealer, who is burnt in the hand, and is a great penitent. Jempro is discharged, and I have appointed Harris to read to the prisoners in his stead. Two of the felons likewise have paid their fees and are gone out, both of them able to read mighty well. There are only two in the gaol who want this accomplishment—John Clanville, who reads but moderately; and the horse-stealer, who cannot read at all, though he knows all his letters and can spell most of the monosyllables. I hear them both read three times a week, and I believe Salmon hears them so many times daily. The woman, who was a perfect novice, spells tolerably; and so does one of the boys; and the other makes shift to read with spelling every word that is longer than ordinary. They can both say their catechism to the end of the commandments, and can likewise repeat the morning and evening prayers for children in Ken's Manual.\*

In all this the world saw naught but oddity and folly, and called these hard-working tutors and godly students "Bible bigots," and

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\* Tyerman's Oxford Methodists.



"Bible moths." In the university John Wesley and his friends became a common topic of mirth, and were jeeringly designated "The Holy Club." John consulted his father, and was encouraged: "As to your designs and employments, what can I say less than *Valde probe* [I strongly approve]; and that I have the highest reason to bless God that he has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has granted grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil? I hear my son John has the honor of being styled the 'Father of the Holy Club;' if it be so, I must be the grandfather of it; and I need not say that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished than to have the title of *His Holiness*."

Once during John Wesley's absence from Oxford, the little band, through persecution and desertion, was greatly weakened; at another time he returned to find it reduced from twenty-seven to five—showing clearly that he was the soul of the movement. In 1732 James Hervey, author of the "Meditations," joined them. His very popular and peculiar style of writing turned the attention of the upper classes of society to religious subjects perhaps more than any other writer of his time. The next year came George Whitefield. Though they diverged from Wesley afterward, they lived, labored, and died "Methodists."

Whitefield has left a characteristic account of his connection with the "Holy Club." He was born in 1714, at the Bell Inn, Bristol. "If I trace myself," he says, "from my cradle to my manhood, I can see nothing in me but a fitness to be damned." Yet Whitefield could trace early movings of his heart, which satisfied him in after-life that "God loved him with an everlasting love, and had separated him even from his mother's womb, for the work to which he afterward was pleased to call him." He had a devout disposition and a tender heart, so far as these terms can fitly characterize unregenerate men.

When about fifteen years old he "put on his blue apron and his snuffers," washed mops, cleaned rooms, and became a "common drawer." He gave evidence of his natural powers of eloquence in school declamations, and while in the Bristol Inn composed two or three sermons. Hearing of the possibility of obtaining an education at Oxford, as a "poor student," he prepared himself and went thither, and was admitted a servitor of Pembroke College. The Methodists were not only the common butt of Oxford

ridicule, but their fame had spread as far as Bristol before Whitefield left his home.<sup>1)</sup> He had "loved them," he tells us, before he entered the university. He longed to be acquainted with them, and often watched them passing through the sneering crowds, to receive the sacrament at St. Mary's; but he was a poor youth, the servitor of other students, and shrunk from obtruding himself upon their notice. At length a woman, in one of the work-houses, attempted to cut her throat; and Whitefield, knowing that both the Wesleys were ready for every good work, sent a poor aged apple-woman to inform Mr. Charles Wesley of it, charging her not to discover who sent her. She went, but contrary to orders told his name, and this led Charles to invite him to breakfast next morning. He was now introduced to the rest of the Methodists, and he also, like them, "began to live by rule, and pick up the very fragments of his time, that not a moment might be lost." Being in great distress about his soul, he lay whole days prostrate on the ground, in silent or vocal prayer; he chose the worst sort of food; he fasted twice a week; he wore woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes; and, as a penitent, thought it unbecoming to have his hair powdered.<sup>2)</sup>

This neglect of his person lost him patronage and cut off some of his pay. Charles Wesley lent him a book, "The Life of God in the Soul of Man;" and he says:

Though I had fasted, watched, and prayed, and received the sacrament so long, yet I never knew what true religion was, till God sent me that excellent treatise by the hands of my never-to-be-forgotten friend. In reading that "true religion was a union of the soul with God, and Christ formed within us," a ray of divine light was instantaneously darted in upon my soul; and from that moment, but not till then, did I know that I must be a new creature. The first thing I was called to give up for God was what the world calls my fair reputation. I had no sooner received the sacrament publicly on a week-day, at St. Mary's, but I was set up as a mark for all the polite students that knew me to shoot at. By this they knew that I was commenced Methodist. Mr. Charles Wesley walked with me, in order to confirm me, from the church even to the college. I confess, to my shame, I would gladly have excused him; and the next day, going to his room, one of our fellows passing by, I was ashamed to be seen to knock at his door. But, blessed be God, the fear of man gradually wore off. As I had imitated Nicodemus in his cowardice, so, by the divine assistance, I followed him in his courage. I confessed the Methodists more and more publicly every day. I walked openly with them, and chose rather to bear contempt with those people of God than to enjoy the applause of almost-Christians for a season.

It may be inferred, but might as well be stated on the testimony of John Wesley, that it was the practice of the Oxford

Methodists to give away each year all they had after providing for their own necessities; and then, as an illustration, he adds, in reference to himself: "One of them had thirty pounds a year. He lived on twenty-eight, and gave away forty shillings. The next year, receiving sixty pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight, and gave away thirty-two. The third year he received ninety pounds, and gave away sixty-two. The fourth year he received a hundred and twenty pounds; still he lived as before on twenty-eight, and gave to the poor all the rest." Such was the typical Oxford Methodist.

He maintained the doctrine of apostolical succession, and believed no one had authority to administer the sacraments who was not *episcopally* ordained. He religiously observed saint-days and holidays, and excluded Dissenters from the holy communion, on the ground that they had not been properly baptized. He observed ecclesiastical discipline to the minutest points, and was scrupulously strict in practicing rubrics and canons.)

In fasting, in mortification, in alms-giving, in well-doing, and by keeping the whole law, he sought purity of heart and peace of conscience. He was intensely earnest, sincere, and self-denying. In all this, while a prodigy of piety in the eyes of man, there was a felt want of harmony with God, and a feebleness amounting to impotency, in the propagation of his faith among men. Like one of old, he could say: "I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more." Sacramentarian, ritualist, legalist: "What lack I yet?" ~ . 8 .



## CHAPTER V.

Breaking up of the Epworth Family—Death and Widowhood—The Parents -  
The Daughters and their History.

THE year 1735 witnessed the breaking up of the two families in which Methodism was born and nursed—one at Epworth and the other at Oxford. After a faithful ministry of forty-seven years, Samuel Wesley died in April. He had been manifestly ripening for his change, and in his last moments had the consolation of the presence of his two sons, John and Charles. From both of them we have accounts of the death-bed scene.

Charles, writing a long letter two days after the funeral to his brother Samuel, says: "You have reason to envy us, who could attend him in the last stage of his illness. The few words he could utter I saved, and hope never to forget. Some of them were: 'Nothing too much to suffer for heaven. The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God. There is but a step between me and death.' The fear of death he had entirely conquered, and at last gave up his latest human desires of finishing Job, paying his debts, and seeing you. He often laid his hand upon my head and said: 'Be steady. The Christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not.' To my sister Emily, he said: 'Do not be concerned at my death; God will then begin to manifest himself to my family.' On my asking him whether he did not find himself worse, he replied: 'O my Charles, I feel a great deal; God chastens me with strong pain, but I praise him for it, I thank him for it, I love him for it!' On the 25th his voice failed him, and nature seemed entirely spent, when, on my brother's asking whether he was not near heaven, he answered distinctly, and with the most of hope and triumph that could be expressed in sounds, 'Yes, I am.' He spoke once more, just after my brother had used the commendatory prayer; his last words were, 'Now you have done all!'"

John Wesley, in his sermon on Love, preached at Savannah (1736), adverts to his father's death: "When asked, not long before his release, 'Are the consolations of God small with you?' he replied aloud, 'No, no, no!' and then calling all that were

near him by their names, he said: 'Think of heaven, talk of heaven; all the time is lost when we are not thinking of heaven.'

In his controversy with Archbishop Secker (1748), on the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit, he cites personal experience:

My father did not die unacquainted with the faith of the gospel, of the primitive Christians, or of our first Reformers; the same which, by the grace of God, I preach, and which is just as new as Christianity. What he experienced before I know not; but I know that, during his last illness, which continued eight months, he enjoyed a clear sense of his acceptance with God. I heard him express it more than once, although, at that time, I understood him not. "The inward witness, son, the inward witness," said he to me, "that is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity." And when I asked him (the time of his change drawing nigh), "Sir, are you in much pain?" he answered aloud with a smile: "God does chasten me with pain—yea, all my bones with strong pain; but I thank him for all, I bless him for all, I love him for all!" I think the last words he spoke, when I had just commended his soul to God, were, "Now you have done all!" and, with the same serene, cheerful countenance, he fell asleep without one struggle, or sigh, or groan. I cannot therefore doubt but the Spirit of God bore an inward witness with his spirit that he was a child of God.

In the long sickness that preceded death the good old rector had occasion to acknowledge the kindness of his people. He outlived the brutal hostility with which he was met during the first years of his residence at Epworth, and his dozen communicants had increased to above a hundred. One of his sayings was, "The Lord will give me at the last all my children, to meet in heaven." To him belongs the distinction of being "the father of the greatest evangelist of modern times, and of the best sacred poet that has flourished during the Christian era." That the three sons of Epworth parsonage became polished shafts is largely due to the scholarly inspiration and care of their father. He had, under great difficulties, obtained a university education himself, and could not be content with a less heritage for them.

Samuel Wesley was buried in his church-yard; and upon the tombstone his widow had these words inscribed as part of the epitaph: "As he lived so he died, in the true catholic faith of the Holy Trinity in Unity, and that *Jesus Christ* is God incarnate, and the only Saviour of mankind."

Methodism owes a debt to endowed scholarships, fellowships, and institutions of learning.<sup>1</sup> Without them, Samuel Wesley and his sons, with George Whitefield, must have gone without the educational outfit which, under God, so mightily prepared them for their life-work. John was maintained six years at Char-

terhouse, and thence sent forward to Oxford upon this foundation. As fellow of Lincoln College, he matured and enlarged his post-graduate attainments, and upon this income initiated Methodism before it was organized so as to support its ministry. In the same way Charles, after becoming a "king's scholar," at Westminster, went through that fine training-school, and afterward graduated at the university. The income of Epworth was utterly unable to bear these charges. The arrangement that made it possible for the elder Wesley and for George Whitefield to get through as "servitors" is part of the same wisdom that lays a "foundation" to bless the ages. Let one think, if he can, of Methodism without these four men; and think of these four men without education.

Those dying-words to his children, "The Christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not," were prophetic. Seven years afterward, John stood on that tombstone and preached the gospel to great and awakened multitudes, "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

A veil is drawn over the parting from old Epworth. Neither of the sons could be prevailed on to succeed their father in the rectory, and so the connection of the family with the spot endeared by associations extending over forty years comes to an end. Beautiful in sorrow, and with the weight of years added to her solitary condition, the mother leaves the memorable place to spend the seven years of her earthly pilgrimage as a widow in about equal portions with four of her children, Emilia, Samuel at Tiverton, Martha, and John in London. In the last change she gathered her five living daughters around her at the Foundry, and, not far from where she commenced, there in peaceful quiet she closed the journey of life, after a glorious but suffering career of seventy-three years. They stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech: "Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God." *Released* was her beautiful thought of death.\*

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\*Dr. Adam Clarke, in summing up the incidents of her life, says: "I have been acquainted with many pious females; I have read the lives of others; but such a woman, take her for all in all, I have not heard of, I have not read of, nor with her equal have I been acquainted. Such a one Solomon has described at the end of his Proverbs; and adapting his words I can say, 'Many daughters have done virtuously, but SUSANNA WESLEY has excelled them all.'"



Still further anticipating history, before taking final leave of the family, we glance at the seven daughters—gifted, cultivated, affectionate, and some of them beautiful women. What unhappy marriages, leading to unhappy lives! This may not be accounted for on the theory that over-education unfitted them for their social sphere. Let us rather look for the cause in a state of things that has not wholly disappeared in our own day—the few suitable avenues that were open to educated women for self-support. Emily, the oldest, was a woman in whom virtue, form, and wit were combined in harmony. She had an exquisite taste for music and poetry. Her brother John pronounced her the best reader of Milton he had ever heard.

Her letters to her brothers are fine specimens of writing. She was occasionally impatient at the straits of the situation, and no wonder. The money spent on “those London journeys” and “convocations of blessed memory” would, in her opinion, have been better spent in quieting “endless duns and debts,” and in buying clothes for the family.

While John was playing at ritualism, he seems to have proposed to her confession and penance. The reply is thoroughly Wesleyan:

Now what can I answer? To indicate my own piety looks vain and ridiculous; to say I am in so bad a way as you suppose me to be would perhaps be unjust to myself and unthankful to God. To lay open the state of my soul to you, or any of our clergy, is what I have no manner of inclination to at present, and believe I never shall. Nor shall I put my conscience under the direction of mortal man, frail as myself. To my own Master I stand or fall; yea, I shall not scruple to say that all such desires in you, or any other ecclesiastic, seem to me to look very much like Church tyranny, and assuming to yourselves a dominion over your fellow-creatures which never was designed you by God.

She married a dull and thriftless man—a “tradesman without a trade”—and by keeping a scantily furnished boarding-school, she supported herself and him. For many years a “widow indeed,” she was useful in her brother’s “classes,” and died at fourscore.

From injury received in infancy, Mary grew up deformed in body and short in stature, but beautiful in face and in mind. This condition exposed her to unseemly remarks from the ignorant and vulgar when she walked abroad. She alone seems to have been married to suit herself and others; but in one short year mother and babe lay in the same grave. When Charles

was passing through college, worrying with a short purse, she wrote: "Dear brother, I beg you not to let the present straits you labor under narrow your mind, or render you morose or churlish in your converse with your acquaintance, but rather resign yourself and all your affairs to Him who best knows what is fittest for you, and will never fail to provide for whoever sincerely trusts in him. I think I may say I have lived in a state of affliction ever since I was born, being the ridicule of mankind and the reproach of my family, and I dare not think God deals hardly with me." A lovely character, her death was rich in elegies from the gifted family.

Anne was so matched as to lead a quiet if not happy life. Her husband was kind, but intemperate. Susanna's husband was rich, but coarse and depraved. The rector spoke of him as the "wen of my family;" and the rector's wife, in the anguish of a mother's heart, wrote to a childless relative:

My second daughter, Sukey, a pretty woman, and worthy a better fate, rashly threw away herself upon a man (if a *man* he may be called who is little inferior to the apostate angels in wickedness) that is not only her plague, but a constant affliction to the family. O sir! O brother! happy, thrice happy, are you; happy is my sister, that buried your children in infancy! secure from temptation, secure from guilt, secure from want or shame, or loss of friends! They are safe beyond the reach of pain or sense of misery; being gone hence, nothing can touch them further. Believe me, sir, it is better to mourn ten children dead than one living; and I have buried many.

His conduct to his wife is represented as harsh and despotic, and under his unkindness "she well-nigh sunk into the grave." At last she fled from him, and found a peaceful death with her children. Some of her last words, after she had been speechless for some time were, "Jesus is here! Heaven is love!" Wesleyan missionaries to the West Indies, and ministers for the Established Church, were of her offspring.\*

In Hetty [Mehetabel] nearly all the graces and gifts of her brothers and sisters were combined. Her personal appearance, accomplishments, and mental endowments were remarkable,

\*The bad, rich man, her husband, became beggarly poor at the last, and also penitent. Charles Wesley says (London, April 11, 1760): "Yesterday evening I buried my brother Ellison. He believed God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven him. I felt a most solemn awe overwhelming me while I committed his body to the earth. He is gone to increase my father's joy in paradise, who often said *every one of his children* would be saved, for God had given them all to him in answer to prayer. God grant I may not be the single exception!"

even for the Wesley family. At the age of eight years she had made such proficiency in classical knowledge that she could read the Greek Testament. Good judges pronounced her poetic gift equal to her younger brother's. Her fancy, wit, and genius outran her judgment, and caused her parents both anxiety and trouble. Her ill-fated marriage took place during the year 1725. Never perhaps were two persons, united in marriage, more unsuited to each other. Her husband was illiterate, vulgar, and unkind; of loose habits, and given to drink.

The following verses were breathed out of Hetty's soul on the early death of her first-born. In an ill-spelled note, the father conveyed the sad news to the two brothers, and adds a postscript:

PS.—I've sen you Sum Verses that my wife maid of Dear Lamb Let me hear from one or both of you as Soon as you think Conveniant. W. W.

A MOTHER'S ADDRESS TO HER DYING INFANT.

Tender softness! infant mild!  
 Perfect, purest, brightest child!  
 Transient luster! beauteous clay!  
 Smiling wonder of a day!  
 Ere the last convulsive start  
 Rend thy unresisting heart;  
 Ere the long-enduring swoon  
 Weigh thy precious eyelids down;  
 Ah, regard a mother's moan,  
 Anguish deeper than thy own!  
 Fairest eyes! whose dawning light  
 Late with rapture blest my sight,  
 Ere your orbs extinguished be,  
 Bend their trembling beams on me!  
 Drooping sweetness! verdant flower,  
 Blooming, withering in an hour!  
 Ere thy gentle breast sustains  
 Latest, fiercest, mortal pains,  
 Hear a suppliant! let me be  
 Partner in thy destiny:  
 That whene'er the fatal cloud  
 Must thy radiant temples shroud;  
 When deadly damps, impending now,  
 Shall hover round thy destined brow,  
 Diffusive may their influence be,  
 And with the blossom blast the tree!

*September, 1728.*

With a degree of perverseness, Hetty held out long, but finally and heartily became a Methodist, and died well. By and by the



dolt and drunkard, who had wearied and worried the life out of her, came to his end praying and repenting, and her forgiving brothers ministered to him and buried him.\*

At a time when she believed and hoped that she should soon be at peace in the grave, she composed this epitaph for herself:

Destined while living to sustain  
An equal share of grief and pain,  
All various ills of human race  
Within this breast had once a place.  
Without complaint she learn'd to bear  
A living death, a long despair;  
Till hard oppress'd by adverse fate,  
O'ercharged, she sunk beneath the weight,  
And to this peaceful tomb retired,  
So much esteem'd, so long desir'd.  
The painful, mortal conflict's o'er;  
A broken heart can bleed no more.

The youngest of the family died unmarried, after a disappointment that embittered her life. Her death was witnessed by Charles, who had often wept and prayed with her. He writes (March 10, 1741): "Yesterday morning sister Kezzy died in the Lord Jesus. He finished his work and cut it short in mercy. Full of thankfulness, resignation, and love, without pain or trouble, she commended her spirit into the hands of Jesus, and fell asleep."

Martha was the counterpart of John. The points of similarity in person, manners, habits of thought, patient endurance, and in other respects, were so marked that Dr. Adam Clarke, who had an intimate personal knowledge of both, has said that if they could have been seen dressed alike it would not have been possible to distinguish the one from the other. Her letters to her brothers make a part of that admirable correspondence by which the current of love and mutual confidence was kept flowing through every member of the family. Writing to John when he was standing for his fellowship, she says: "I believe you very well deserve to be happy, and I sincerely wish you may be so, both in this life and the next. For my own particular, I have long looked upon myself to be what the world calls ruined—that is, I believe there will never be any provision made for me; but when my father dies I shall have my choice of three things:

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\* Stevenson's Memorials of the Wesley Family.

starving, going to a common service, or marrying meanly, as my sisters have done; none of which I like." She married Westley Hall, a clergyman—an Oxonian, and one of the original "Holy Club." He is described by Dr. A. Clarke as "a curate in the Church of England, who became a Moravian, a Quietist, a Deist (if not an Atheist), and a Polygamist—which last he defended in his teaching and illustrated by his practice." Her husband deserted her, her children died. She was never known to speak unkindly of him, even at the worst. She was the friend of Samuel Johnson, and often took tea with the literary Jove, who enjoyed her Christian refinement and quiet wisdom; and these occasions furnished Boswell with quotable paragraphs. To one speaking of her severe trials she replied: "Evil was not kept from me; but evil has been kept from harming me." Even when reproving sin, she was so gentle that no one was ever known to be offended thereby. Her kindly nature remained unchanged to the end of life, and she lived to be eighty-five—outliving all the Epworth family. John Wesley remembered his sister in his will, leaving her a legacy of £40, to be paid out of the proceeds of the sale of his books. Her last illness was brief; she had no disease, but a mere decay of nature. She spoke of her dissolution with the same tranquillity with which she spoke of every thing else. A little before her departure she said: "I have now a sensation that convinces me that my departure is near; the heart-strings seem gently but entirely loosened." Her niece asked her if she was in pain. "No, but a new feeling." Just before she closed her eyes she bid her niece come near; she pressed her hand, and said: "I have the assurance which I have long prayed for. Shout!"—and expired. Her remains were interred in the City Road burial-ground, in the same vault with her brother; and on her tomb is the following inscription: "She opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness (Prov. xxxi. 26)."

## CHAPTER VI.

The Oxford Family Broken Up—Glances at the History of its Several Members—  
The Georgia Colony—Why the Wesleys went as Missionaries.

THERE was a strong missionary spirit in the Wesley family when Christian missions to the heathen scarce existed. The John Wesley of 1662, after being ejected from his church-living, longed to go as a missionary to Maryland. Samuel Wesley, his son, when a young man, formed a magnificent scheme for the East, and was willing to undertake the mission under the Government's patronage. Now the Georgia Colony invites his sons, and they go. General Oglethorpe, its founder and governor, having taken out the first company of emigrants and settled them, published that a door was opened for the conversion of the Indians; and nothing seemed to be wanting but a minister who understood their language.

There is a good deal of romance in the conception of a mission to the heathen, as many ardent minds conceive of it; and John Wesley was not an exception. The charm of the mystic writers still hung about him; it was to be dispelled in the wilds of America. Though he had not embraced the peculiar sentiments of those who were grossly unscriptural, yet he still believed many of the mystic writers were, to use his own words, "the best explainers of the gospel of Christ;" and those that are supposed to be the purest of them continually cry out, "To the desert! to the desert!" At this time, having only attained to what St. Paul calls "the spirit of bondage unto fear," he found that company and almost every person discomposed his mind, and that all his senses were ready to betray him into sin, upon every exercise. All within him, as well as every creature he conversed with, tended to extort that bitter cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" No wonder he should close in with a proposal which seemed at one stroke to cut him off from both the smiling and the frowning world, and to enable him to be crucified with Christ, which he then thought could be only thus attained.

All our Atlantic coast had been taken up by charters and grants, save a narrow sea-front between the Savannah and the Altamaha



rivers. The Spaniards were in Florida, the English in the Carolinas, and the French in Canada and Louisiana. On the 9th of June, 1732, a charter was obtained from George II., erecting this thin slice of America into the Province of Georgia, and appointing Oglethorpe and twenty other gentlemen trustees to hold the same for a period of twenty-one years, "in trust for the poor." The name of Georgia was given to it in compliment to the sovereign under whose auspices it was commenced, and who subscribed £500. The design of the undertaking was twofold. It was to be an outlet to the redundant population at home, especially of London; and to be an asylum for such foreign Protestants as were harassed by popish persecution.

Those were days of harsh government. The gallows was the penalty for petty thefts; and each year at least four thousand unhappy men in Great Britain were immured in prison for the misfortune of being poor. A small debt was enough to expose a struggling man to imprisonment. A Parliamentary commission under Oglethorpe resulted in the release of hundreds. The persecution of the Moravians and the Saltzburgers in popish states excited the sympathy and indignation of Protestant England. The Bank of England presented a donation of £10,000; an equal amount was voted by the House of Commons; and the total sum raised, with but little effort, was £36,000. Within five months after the signing of the charter, the first company of emigrants—one hundred and twenty-six in number—set sail, with Oglethorpe as their commander. In February, 1733, the colonists reached the high bluff on which Savannah stands. The streets of the intended town were laid out, and the houses were constructed on one model. Other ship-loads followed, and more colonists found homes there. Each freeholder was allotted fifty acres of ground, five of which were near Savannah, and the remaining forty-five farther off. Thus began the Commonwealth of Georgia.

In a letter dated October 10, 1735, Wesley gives his reasons for going to Georgia:

*My chief motive is the hope of saving my own soul! I hope to learn the true sense of the gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasing truths. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to*

do, the will of God. A right faith will, I trust, by the mercy of God, open the way for a right practice; especially when most of those temptations are removed which here so easily beset me. It will be no small thing to be able, without fear of giving offense, to live on water and the fruits of the earth. An Indian hut affords no food for curiosity, no gratification of the desire of grand, or new, or pretty things. The pomp and show of the world have no place in the wilds of America.

And he sums up all in one sentence: "I cannot hope to attain the same degree of holiness here which I may there." An excellent authority\* thus explains the state of the two brothers: "According to their apprehensions, true holiness is attained principally by means of sufferings—mental and bodily; and hence they adopted this mode of life, resolved to do and suffer whatever it should please God to lay upon them. Their theological views were not only defective, but erroneous. They understood not the true nature of a sinner's justification before God; nor the faith by which it is obtained; nor its connection with sanctification. Holiness of heart and life was the object of their eager pursuit; and this they sought not by faith, but by works and personal austerity." The Georgia Trustees, inviting the Wesleys, told them "plausible and popular doctors of divinity were not the men wanted" for the infant colony; but they sought for men "inured to contempt of the ornaments and conveniences of life, to godly austerities, and to serious thoughts;" and such they considered them. They add: "You will find abundant room for the exercise of patience and prudence, as well as piety. One end for which we were associated was the conversion of negro slaves. As yet nothing has been attempted in this way, but a door is opened. The Purisburgers† have purchased slaves; they act under our influence; and Mr. Oglethorpe will think it advisable to begin there."

The hearty Yorkshire Methodist, James Ingham, who was now a curate in the country, wrote Wesley: "I have had a great many turns and changes since I saw you. I believe I must be perfected through sufferings. Notwithstanding, by the blessing of God, I hope to press on, and persevere in the constant use of all the means of grace." He received, in reply: "Fast and pray, and then send me word whether you dare go with me to the Indians." He went, as also did Charles Delamotte, son of a London merchant, who had "a mind to leave the world and give

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\*Thomas Jackson's Life of C. Wesley. †Purisburg, a settlement twenty miles above Savannah, on the Carolina side.

himself up entirely to God." This young man was so attached to Wesley that he asked leave to accompany him, even as his servant rather than miss being with him.

Before John Wesley consented to go as a missionary to the Indians, his mother was consulted. He dreaded the grief it would give her. "I am," said he, "the staff of her age, her chief support and comfort." On the proposal being put to Mrs. Wesley, she said: "If I had twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." It was finally arranged that Charles should accompany him as secretary to the governor; and Charles was now ordained, that he might be able to officiate as a clergyman in the colony.

On October 14, 1735, Wesley embarked with his companions, taking with him five hundred and fifty copies of a treatise on the Lord's Supper, besides other books—"the gift of several Christian friends for the use of the settlers in Georgia." The head is taken away from them, and soon the Oxford family, like that at Epworth, will be scattered. Let us glance at them.

"Bob Kirkham" was of Merton College—son of a Gloucestershire clergyman. A rollicking fellow, wasting money and time, he seems to have been gained over to temperance and steadiness by our Fellow of Lincoln. In a letter to John Wesley, as early as 1726, he speaks of "your most deserving, queer character, your personal accomplishments, your noble endowments of mind, your little and handsome person, and your most obliging and desirable conversation." Three months after the first Methodist meeting in Oxford (1730), Wesley writes to his mother, describing the "strange" reformation: "Why, he has left off tea, struck off his drinking acquaintances to a man, given the hours above specified to the Greek Testament and Hugo Grotius, and spent the evenings either by himself or with my brother and me." Next year Kirkham left, and became his father's curate.\*

The Wesleys and Kirkham were the sons of English clergymen. Morgan was the son of an Irish gentleman, resident in Dublin. A young layman with a liberal allowance from his father, he moved the Methodists to add to Greek Testament readings and prayers and weekly communions the visiting of prisons and

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\*Tyerman, from whose interesting volume—"The Oxford Methodists"—our information is derived, concludes: "We have tried to obtain information concerning his subsequent career, but have failed."



the care of the poor. He was the precursor of Howard, by a generation. Wesley writes:

In the summer of 1730, Mr. Morgan told me he had called at the gaol, to see a man who was condemned for killing his wife; and that from the talk he had with one of the debtors, he verily believed it would do much good, if any one would be at the pains of now and then speaking with them. This he so frequently repeated that, on the 24th of August, 1730, my brother and I walked with him to the Castle. We were so well satisfied with our conversation there that we agreed to go thither once or twice a week; which we had not done long, before he desired me to go with him to see a poor woman in the town, who was sick. In this employment, too, when we came to reflect upon it, we believed it would be worth while to spend an hour or two in a week.

Such "peculiar" conduct gave rise to criticism and opposition, and they consulted the old Epworth rector. Wesley's father wrote: "You have reason to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. Morgan, who, I see, in the most difficult service, is ready to break the ice for you. You do not know of how much good that poor wretch, who killed his wife, has been the providential occasion. I think I must adopt Mr. Morgan to be my son, together with you and your brother Charles; and, when I have such a ternion to prosecute that war, wherein I am now *miles emeritus*, I shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate."

Morgan's father wrote him very differently:

You cannot conceive what a noise that ridiculous society in which you are engaged has made here. Besides the particulars of the great follies of it at Oxford (which to my great concern I have often heard repeated), it gave me sensible trouble to hear that you were noted for going into the villages about Holt, calling their children together, and teaching them their prayers and catechism, and giving them a shilling at your departure. I could not but advise with a wise, pious, and learned clergyman. He told me that he has known the worst of consequences follow from such blind zeal; and plainly satisfied me that it was a thorough mistake of true piety and religion. I proposed writing to some prudent and good man at Oxford to reason with you on these points, and to convince you that you were in a wrong way. He said, in a generous mind, as he took yours to be, the admonition and advice of a father would make a deeper impression than all the exhortations of others. He concluded that you were young as yet, and that your judgment was not come to its maturity; but as soon as your judgment improved, and on the advice of a true friend, you would see the error of your way, and think, as he does, that you may walk uprightly and safely, without endeavoring to outdo all the good bishops, clergy, and other pious and good men of the present and past ages; which God Almighty give you grace and sense to understand aright!

Morgan's decease occurred in Dublin, August, 1732; and no sooner was the event known than it was wickedly and cruelly

alleged that his Methodist associates had killed him by fastings and overrighteousness.\*

The first of the many published defenses made by Methodists against public clamor was made on this occasion; and so thoroughly was the father of Morgan satisfied, instead of blaming them he became their faithful friend and defender. This was shown not in words only, but in deeds; for, during the next year, he sent his surviving son to Oxford, and placed him under the tuition of Wesley. This fashionable young man entered Lincoln College, bringing a favorite greyhound with him, and choosing men "more pernicious than open libertines" for his companions. Wesley did his best on the airy and thoughtless youth, but failed; at length he desired Hervey to undertake the task, and he succeeded. Gambold writes: "Mr. Hervey, by his easy and engaging conversation, by letting him see a mind thoroughly serious and happy, where so many of the fine qualities he most esteemed were all gone over into the service of religion, gained Mr. Morgan's heart to the best purposes."

The friendship between Clayton and the Wesley brothers was close and unbroken until the latter departed from Church usages, and became out-door evangelists. He was introduced to the Oxford Methodists in 1732, and at his recommendation they took to fasting twice a week. A model of diligence and self-denial, he never quailed before ridicule or even sterner measures of persecution. He continued and ended as he began—a ritualist, plunging into the Christian fathers, listening to apostolical and other canons as to the Bible, and displaying anxiety about sacramental wine being mixed with water.

John Wesley, between the years 1738 and 1773, visited Manchester (Clayton's parish) more than twenty times; and yet there is no evidence of any renewal of that fraternal intercourse which was interrupted when Wesley began to preach salvation by faith only, and, in consequence, was excluded from the pulpits of the Established Church. This was heresy too great. To be saved by faith in Christ, instead of by sacraments, fasts, pen-

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\*A short extract from Samuel Wesley's poem on Morgan's death:

Wise in his prime, he waited not till noon,  
Convinced that mortals "never lived too soon."  
As if foreboding then his little stay,  
He made his morning bear the heat of day.  
Nor yet the priestly function he invades:  
'Tis not his sermon, but his life, persuades.

ances, ritualism, and good works, was deserving of Clayton's lifelong censure; and hence, after 1738, the two old Oxford friends seem to have been separated till they met in heaven.\*

Gambold's account of Wesley and his Oxford company has already been referred to. From another letter written to him before he returned from Georgia, we see the burden of Gambold's thoughts: "O what is regeneration? And what doth baptism? How shall we reconcile faith and fact? Is Christianity become effete, and sunk again into the bosom of nature? But to come to the point. That regeneration is the beginning of a life which is not fully enjoyed but in another world, we all know. But how much of it may be enjoyed at present? What degree of it does the experience of mankind encourage us to expect? And by what symptoms shall we know it?"

Similar thoughts were deeply engaging Wesley's mind at that very time. Two or three years afterward, the Rev. John Gambold, the learned, moping, gloomy, philosophic, poetic Mystic, became a humble, happy, trustful believer in Christ Jesus. He gave up his living, severed his connection with the Established Church and joined the Moravians. In 1754, as the chief English member of their community, he was ordained a "*Chor-Episcopus*," or Assistant Bishop. With some faults, at the beginning of its history in England, the *Unitas Fratrum* set a true and heroic example to other Churches, in its missions to the heathen; and the man who helped to purify, improve, and perpetuate such a community did no mean service to the Master. For seventeen years, he wore the honors of his office "with humility and diffidence."

The last time that he attended the public celebration of the Lord's Supper was only five days before his death. At the conclusion of it, weak and wasted, he commenced singing a verse of praise and thanksgiving, and the impression produced was such that the whole congregation began to weep.†

Hervey has been designated the Melancthon of the Methodist

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\*Charles Wesley writes October 30, 1756: "I stood close to Mr. Clayton in church (as all the week past), but not a look would he cast toward me—

So stiff was his parochial pride."

†Tyerman, whose "Oxford Methodists" furnishes our sketch, thinks it was Gambold's yearning for *Christian fellowship* that united him to the Moravians—the fellowship that Methodist love-feasts and class-meetings, of a later day, afford.



Reformation. The flowing harmony and the elaborate polish of his works secured the attention of the upper circles of society to a far greater extent than the writings of Wesley. Hervey avowedly wrote for the *élite*; Wesley for the masses. His books passed through a marvelous number of editions in his day, and his "Contemplations" still finds readers. Whitefield wrote to him: "Blessed be God for causing you to write so as to suit the taste of the polite world! O that they may be won over to admire Him, who is indeed altogether lovely!" The "polite world" read his works because they were flowery; the Methodists, because they were savory; "and while, through their medium, the former looked at grace with less prejudice, the latter looked at nature with more delight."\*

Just before his ordination (1736), he wrote to Wesley, now in Georgia: "I have read your 'Journal,' and find that the Lord hath done great things for you already, whereof we rejoice. Surely, he will continue his loving-kindness to you, and show you greater things than these. Methinks, when you and dear Mr. Ingham go forth upon the great and good enterprise of converting the Indians, you will, in some respects, resemble Noah and his little household going forth of the ark."

Wesley had been his tutor, and Hervey often thanks him for having taught him Hebrew, and speaks of him gratefully as "the friend of my studies, the friend of my soul, the friend of all my valuable and eternal interests; that tender-hearted and generous Fellow of Lincoln, who condescended to take such compassionate notice of a poor undergraduate, whom almost everybody condemned, and for whose soul no man cared." It was said Hervey's mission was to "sanctify the sentimentalism of the day."

To one of the Oxford Methodists who had taken up residence at Bath—the gay watering-place—he gives these directions:

I would be earnest with God to make my countenance shine with a smiling serenity; that there might sit something on my cheeks which would declare the peace and joy of my heart. The world has strange apprehensions of the Methodists. They

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\* Devoutly he blesses the providence of God for his well-used microscope, which, in the gardens and fields, he almost always took with him. He believed and intimated that the discovery of so much of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the great Creator, even in the minutest parts of vegetable and animalcular creation, helped to attune his soul to sing the song of the four-and-twenty elders: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—*Tyerman*.

imagine them to be so many walking mopes, more like the ghost in a play than sociable creatures. To obviate this sad prejudice, be always sprightly and agreeable. If a pretty turn of wit, or a diverting story offer itself to your mind, do not scruple to entertain the company therewith. Every thing that borders upon sourness, moroseness, or ill-breeding, I would cautiously avoid; and every thing that may give a beautiful or amiable idea of holiness, I would study to show forth. I do not mean, by what I have said, that you should make all sorts of compliances. A solicitation to join with your acquaintance in billiards, dice, cards, dancing, etc., should be rejected.

In his old age Wesley, while claiming the ability "to write floridly and rhetorically," adds: "I dare no more write in a *fine style* than wear a fine coat. I should purposely decline, what many admire, a highly ornamental style. I cannot admire French oratory; I despise it from my heart." It was otherwise with Hervey. Of set purpose he cultivated the "*fine style*." "My writings," said he, "are not fit for ordinary people; I never give them to such persons, and dissuade this class of men from procuring them. O that they may be of some service to the more refined part of the world! . I don't pretend, nor do I wish, to write one *new* truth. The utmost of my aim is to represent old doctrines in a pleasing light, and dress them in a fashionable or genteel manner."

In 1739, Whitefield, replying to a friend who had read Hervey's "Meditations," overflows: "It has gone through six editions. The author of it is my old friend, a most heavenly-minded creature, one of the first of the Methodists, who is contented with a small cure, and gives all that he has to the poor. He is very weak, and daily waits for his dissolution. We correspond with, though we cannot see, one another. We shall, ere long, meet in heaven."

Hervey's charity to the poor was only limited by his means, and even such a limit was sometimes overstepped. To prevent embarrassment, his friends practiced upon him the innocent deception of borrowing his money when he received his salary, lest he should dispense it all in benefactions; and then repaying it as his necessities required. All the profits of his "Meditations," amounting to £700, he distributed in charitable donations; and directed that any profit arising from the sale of his books after his decease should be used in the same manner.

Hervey was converted after he had been preaching four years. Resting on his own works, and on communicating, and on alms-

giving, he at length rested on Christ. A sentence or two from a long letter to Whitefield will indicate his experience:

But I trust the divine truth begins to dawn upon my soul. Was I posses of all the righteous acts that have made saints and martyrs famous in all generations—could they all be transferred to me, and might I call them all my own—I would renounce them all that I might win Christ. . . My schemes are altered. I now desire to work in my blessed Master's service, not *for*, but *from*, salvation. I would now fain *serve* him who has *saved* me. I would glorify him before *men* who has justified me before *God*. I would study to please him in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life. I seek this blessing not as a *condition*, but as a *part*—a choice and inestimable *part*—of that complete salvation which Jesus has purchased for me.

Hervey's published sermons are few in number. "I have never," said he, "since I was minister at Weston, used written notes; so that all my public discourses are vanished into air; unless the blessed Spirit has left any traces of them on the hearts of the hearers." One who heard him describes his later pulpit efforts: "His subjects were always serious and sublime; they might well be ranged under three heads—Ruin, Righteousness, and Regeneration. He always steered a middle course, between a haughty positivity and a skeptical hesitation."

The friendship of these Oxford Methodists was most sincere and cordial, but was not unruffled. The "moderate Calvinism" of Theron and Aspasio brought forth criticism from Wesley. He begs that Hervey will lay aside the phrase "the imputed righteousness of Christ," adding: "It is *not* scriptural, it is not necessary, it has done immense hurt." Their friendship was beclouded; and it is a mournful fact that the last few months of Hervey's lovely life (he died in 1758) were spent in fighting one who, a quarter of a century before, had been the greatest of his human oracles.

Broughton became curate of the Tower of London, where he had much to do with prisoners. He seems to have continued a sturdy Churchman, and opposed to the later development of Methodism. Charles Wesley, on visiting Newgate prison, in 1743, observes: "I found the poor souls turned out of the way by Mr. Broughton. He told them: 'There is no knowing our sins forgiven; and, if any could expect it, not such wretches as they, but the good people, who had done so and so. As for *his* part, he had it not himself; therefore it was plain they could not receive it.'" The same year Broughton was appointed the Secre-



tary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, an office which he held until his death in 1777. For thirty-four years the secretarial duties of this society were his principal employment. In the society's house he spent five hours every day in the week, except on Saturdays and Sundays. It was a Bible, Prayer-book, Religious Tract, Home and Foreign Mission, and Industrial Society, all in one, of which Broughton was the chief manager. It had the honor of being the pioneer of some of the greatest movements of the present day. It distributed Bibles long before the British and Foreign Bible Society existed. The great Religious Tract Society was not formed until twenty-two years after Broughton's death. Its foreign missions were few in number, but were important and successful—one of its missionaries being the celebrated Schwartz. One Sunday morning Broughton put on his ministerial robes and, according to his wont, retired into his room till church-time. The bells were ringing, and he continued in his closet. They ceased, but he made no appearance. His friends entered, and found him on his knees—dead. An original portrait of him hangs in the Room of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Kinchin, a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, left Oxford about the same time the Wesleys did, and became rector of a small village church. Like a good primitive Methodist, he visited from house to house, catechised the children, and had public prayers twice every day—in the morning before the people went to work, and in the evening, after their return. He was elected Dean of Corpus Christi, but he continued faithful to the principles of the Methodists, and, on the removal of Hervey, Whitefield, and others from the University, took upon himself the spiritual charge of the prisoners. Charles Wesley, on his return from Georgia, hastened to Oxford, where, in February, 1737, he met with "good Mr. Gambold," "poor, languid Smith," and "Mr. Kinchin, whom," says he, "I found changed into a courageous soldier of Christ." He died in 1742.

Hall was, as has been seen, the Judas of the company—"a hawk among the doves of the Wesley family." It is on record by those who were with Hall during his dying-hours, that his last testimony concerning his deserted wife was: "I have injured an angel! an angel that never reproached me." John Wesley notes in his journal (January 2, 1776): "I came [to Bristol] just

time enough not to see but to bury poor Mr. Hall, my brother-in-law, who died on Wednesday morning, I trust in peace, for God had given him deep repentance. Such another monument of Divine mercy, considering how low he had fallen, and from what heights of holiness, I have not seen—no, not in seventy years.” The other Oxford Methodists—Boyce, Chapman, and Atkinson, and the rest—made small record. Glimpses of them show the parish priest, in humble places, doing his work—some in the later, and others in the earlier, Methodist spirit; but all earnest. The best we can say with certainty of each is: When last seen he was in good company. Of John Whitelamb—connected with both the Epworth and the Oxford families—there are a few memorials. He was the son of one of Samuel Wesley’s peasant parishioners at Wroot, and as an amanuensis, had rendered the rector important service for four years. While resident beneath his roof, Whitelamb acquired a sufficient knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages to enter Lincoln College, where he was principally maintained by the Epworth rector, and had John Wesley for his tutor.

Wesley wrote of him in 1731: “He reads one English, one Latin, and one Greek book alternately; and never meddles with a new one, in any of the languages, till he has ended the old one. If he goes on as he has begun, I dare take upon me to say that by the time he has been here four or five years there will not be such a one, of his standing, in Lincoln College, perhaps not in the University of Oxford.” Like his patrons, however, Whitelamb was very poor; and poverty implies trials. Obligated to wear second-hand gowns and other gear, he was spoken of by one not used to employ opprobrious epithets as “poor, starveling Johnny.”

In 1733 Whitelamb became Samuel Wesley’s curate, and soon afterward married his daughter Mary. She was eleven years older than himself. Her amiable temper made her the delight and favorite of the whole family. To provide for the newly-married pair, Samuel Wesley resigned to Whitelamb his rectory at Wroot. The village—a few miles from Epworth—was sequestered, and the salary small; but, despite their thatched residence, and the boorishness of the people among whom they lived, they were happy. Their union, however, was of brief duration. Within a year of their marriage the wife died.\*

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\*Stevenson’s Memorials of the Wesley Family.

At this time Oglethorpe returned from Georgia, whither he had gone with his first company of motley emigrants. Samuel Wesley, now within six months of his decease, took an intense interest in the Georgian colony, and declared that if he had been ten years younger he would gladly have devoted the remainder of his life and labors to the emigrants, and in acquiring the language of the Indians among whom they had to live. Among others who had gone to Georgia with Oglethorpe, and had returned with him, was one of Samuel Wesley's parishioners, of whom the venerable rector earnestly inquired whether the ministers who had migrated to the infant colony understood the Indian language, and could preach without interpreters. Correspondence with General Oglethorpe followed, and the rector had the pleasure, as he could not go himself into that missionary field, of forwarding an application from his son-in-law—incon-solable at his late bereavement. His sons John and Charles sailed for the colony next year, but for some unknown reason his son-in-law did not. Tyerman asks: "Did Whitelamb miss the way of Providence in not becoming a Georgian missionary? Perhaps he did. At all events, the remaining thirty-four years of his life seem to have been of comparatively small importance to his fellow-men. A person of retiring habits and fond of solitude," he lived and died at Wroot; and though he was unable to accept the later development of Methodism that was soon shaking the land, we must always think kindly of the man who made the gifted and afflicted Mary Wesley happy.

The Oxford family, like the Epworth, is broken up—dispersed forever. In a qualified sense, we may apply to Oxford Methodism the words of the sacred text: "A river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads."



## CHAPTER VII.

Voyage to Georgia—The Moravians—Lessons in a Storm—Reaches Savannah—Labors There—The Indians—A Beginning Made—The Wesleys Leave Georgia.

JOHN WESLEY is on board the ship *Symmonds*, bound for America, with one hundred and twenty-four persons—men, women, and children. His brother Charles, Benjamin Ingham, Charles Delamotte, and David Nitschman, are on board also. David is a Moravian bishop, and, accompanied by twenty-six Moravians, is on his way to visit the Brethren in Georgia, who had emigrated during the preceding year under the guidance of their ministers, Spangenberg, John Toelschig, and Anthony Seyffart.

Such were the chief of Wesley's fellow-voyagers. As already stated, they left London to embark, on October 14, 1735; but it was not until December that they fairly started. They encountered storms and calms; then had to await the man-of-war that was to be their convoy.

Ingham's journal reads:

We had two cabins allotted us in the forecastle; I and Mr. Delamotte having the first, and Messrs. Wesley the other. Theirs was made pretty large, so that we could all meet together to read or pray in it. This part of the ship was assigned to us by Mr. Oglethorpe, as being most convenient for privacy.

October 17, Mr. John Wesley began to learn the German tongue, in order to converse with the Moravians, a good, devout, peaceable, and heavenly-minded people, who were persecuted by the papists, and driven from their native country, upon the account of their religion. They were graciously received and protected by Count Zinzendorf, of Herrnhut, a very holy man, who sent them over into Georgia, where lands will be given them. There are twenty-six of them in our ship; and almost the only time that you could know they were in the ship was when they were harmoniously singing the praises of the Great Creator, which they constantly do in public twice a day, wherever they are. Their example was very edifying. They are more like the Primitive Christians than any other Church now in the world; for they retain both the faith, practice, and discipline delivered by the apostles.

From the same source we learn that, on October 18, Wesley and Ingham began to read the Old Testament together, and, at the rate of between nine and ten chapters daily, finished it before they arrived at Georgia. On the day following, Wesley commenced preaching without notes; and during the passage, in a

series of sermons, he went through the whole of our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, and, every Sunday, had the sacrament.

General Oglethorpe was in command, but John Wesley was the religious head of the floating community, and his habits prevailed over all around him. The daily course of life among the Methodist party was directed by him. From four till five o'clock in the morning each of them used private prayer; from five till seven they read the Bible together, carefully comparing it with the writings of the earliest Christian ages; at seven they breakfasted; at eight were the public prayers. From nine to twelve Wesley usually studied German, and Delamotte Greek or Navigation, while Charles Wesley, lately ordained, wrote sermons, and Ingham instructed the children. At twelve they met to give an account of what they had done since their last meeting, and of what they designed to do before the next. About one they dined; the time from dinner to four was spent in reading to persons on board, a number of whom each of them had taken in charge. At four were the evening prayers, when either the second lesson was explained (as the first was in the morning) or the children were catechised and instructed before the congregation. From five to six they again used private prayer. From six to seven they read in their cabins to the passengers (of whom about eighty were English). At seven Wesley joined with the Germans in their public service, while Mr. Ingham was reading between the decks to as many as desired to hear. At eight they all met together again, to give an account of what they had done, whom they had conversed with, and to deliberate on the best method of proceeding with such and such persons: what advice, direction, exhortation, or reproof, was necessary for them. Sometimes they read a little, concluding with prayer; and so they went to bed about nine, sleeping soundly upon mats and blankets, regarding neither the noise of the sea nor of the sailors.

It has been well remarked that the ship became at once a Bethel and a seminary. "It was Epworth rectory and Susanna Wesley's discipline afloat on the Atlantic." The meeting of the Wesleys with the pious refugees appeared to be casual, but it was, in fact, one of those providential arrangements out of which the most momentous consequences arise. The great event of the voyage, as affecting Methodism, was the illustration of genuine religion which the little band of Moravian passengers

afforded. It made a deep impression upon the susceptible and observant minds of the two Wesleys, especially upon that of John.

A storm came upon them when within ten days' sail of the American continent. The waves of the sea were mighty, and raged horribly; the winds roared, and the ship not only rocked to and fro with the utmost violence, but shook and jarred with so unequal and grating a motion that the passengers could with difficulty keep their hold of any thing. Every ten minutes came a shock against the stern or side of the ship, which seemed as if it would dash the planks in pieces. In this state of things, John Wesley writes:

I went to the Germans. I had long before observed the great seriousness of their behavior. Of their humility they had given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers which none of the English would undertake, for which they desired and would receive no pay, saying it was good for their proud hearts and their loving Saviour had done more for them. And every day had given them occasion of showing a meekness which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main-sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterward, "Was you not afraid?" He answered, "I thank God, no." I asked, "But were not your women and children afraid?" He replied mildly, "No; our women and children are not afraid to die."

From them Wesley returned to the affrighted English, and pointed out the difference between him that feareth God and him that feareth him not; and then concludes his account of the storm by saying, "This was the most glorious day which I have hitherto seen." Thus he had a glimpse of a religious experience, which keeps the mind at peace under all circumstances, "and vanquishes that feeling which a formal and defective religion may lull to temporary sleep, but cannot eradicate--the fear of death."

The voyage was made in fifty-seven days. Oglethorpe seems to have acted with generosity and propriety toward his company in the cabin. He was irritable and impulsive, but magnanimous. Wesley, hearing an unusual noise in the General's cabin, entered to inquire the cause; on which the angry soldier cried: "Excuse me, Mr. Wesley, I have met with a provocation too great to bear.



This villain, Grimaldi (an Italian servant), has drunk nearly the whole of my Cyprus wine, the only wine that agrees with me, and several dozens of which I had provided for myself. But I am determined to be revenged. The rascal shall be tied hand and foot, and be carried to the man-of-war; for I never forgive." "Then," said Wesley with great calmness, "I hope, sir, you never sin." Oglethorpe was confounded, his vengeance was gone; he put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a bunch of keys, and threw them at Grimaldi, saying: "There, villain! take my keys, and behave better for the future."

February 5, 1736, the Symmonds cast anchor in Savannah River; and on the following day the passengers landed upon a small island. Oglethorpe led the first company that left the ship, including the Wesleys, to a rising ground, where they all kneeled down to give thanks to God for their preservation. He now took boat for the settlement of Savannah, then a town of about forty houses. Oglethorpe's first act was to give orders to provide materials to build a church. Wesley met on his arrival in Georgia the well-known Moravian elder, August Gottlieb Spangenberg, and asked his advice how to act in his new sphere of labor. Spangenberg replied: "My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" Wesley was surprised at such questions. They were new to him. He was at a loss to answer. Spangenberg continued, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" This was easier, and Wesley answered, "I know he is the Saviour of the world." "True," said Spangenberg; "but do you know he has saved *you*?" Wesley was again perplexed, but answered, "I hope he has died to save me." Spangenberg only added, "Do you know yourself?" "I do," responded Wesley; "but," he writes, "I fear they were vain words." An enigmatical conversation, leading the Oxford priest to think on doctrines which it took him the next two years to understand.

Ingham and Charles Wesley went off with Oglethorpe to lay out the town of Frederica; and Wesley and Delamotte, having no house of their own to live in, lodged, during the first month, with Spangenberg, Nitschman, and other Moravians. Wesley writes: "They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humor with one another; they had put away all an-

ger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamor, and evil-speaking; they walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called." His Churchly prejudices were rebuked by the apostolic purity of their ecclesiastical forms. They met, he says, to consult concerning the affairs of their Church—Spangenberg being about to go to Pennsylvania, and Bishop Nitschman to return to Germany. After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a bishop. The great simplicity, as well as solemnity, of the proceeding almost made him forget the seventeen hundred years between him and the apostles, and imagine himself in one of those assemblies where form and state were unknown, but Paul the tent-maker or Peter the fisherman presided, yet with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

+ March 7 he commenced his ministry at Savannah, preaching on 1 Corinthians xiii. 3. He officiated at nine in the morning, at twelve, and again in the afternoon; and announced his design to administer the sacrament on every Sunday and on every holiday. A few days subsequent to this, writing to his mother, he remarked: "We are likely to stay here some months. The place is pleasant beyond imagination, and exceeding healthful. I have not had a moment's illness of any kind since I set my foot upon the continent; nor do I know any more than one of my seven hundred parishioners who is sick at this time."\*

In a few weeks after Wesley had commenced his ministry, he had established daily morning and evening public prayers. It was also agreed: "1. To advise the more serious to form themselves into a sort of little society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to reprove, instruct, and exhort one another. 2. To select out of these a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded partly by conversing singly with each and partly by inviting all together to the pastor's house every Sunday in the afternoon." This he

+ \*To make up that number of parishioners he counted the whole of Georgia as his parish. The Saltzburghers arrived in March, the year before, and chose a settlement twenty miles from Savannah, where there were "rivers, little hills, clear brooks, cool springs, a fertile soil, and plenty of grass." To the spot which they had chosen as their settlement they gave the name of Ebenezer. The French settlers were at Highgate, five miles away; and the Germans at Hampstead; and the Highlanders at Darien—with their kirk minister, Macleod; and threescore souls were dwelling in the palmetto huts of Frederica, a hundred miles to the south. (Tyerman.)

afterward reckoned as the first *Methodist* society in America, and the second in the world.)

Delamotte's school of between thirty and forty children were taught to read, write, and cast accounts. Wesley catechised them every Saturday and Sunday afternoon. Every Sunday he had three public services—at five in the morning, twelve at midday, and three in the afternoon. He visited from house to house, taking the midday hours in summer, because the people, on account of the heat, were then at home and at leisure. It seems that he also taught a school for a time. This legend is preserved: A part of the boys in Delamotte's school wore stockings and shoes, and the others not. The former ridiculed the latter. Delamotte tried to put a stop to this uncourteous banter, but told Wesley he had failed. Wesley replied: "I think I can cure it. If you will take charge of my school next week, I will take charge of yours, and will try." The exchange was made, and on Monday morning Wesley went into school barefoot. The children seemed surprised, but, without any reference to past jeerings, Wesley kept them at their work. Before the week was ended, the shoeless ones began to gather courage; and some of the others, seeing their minister and master come without shoes and stockings, began to copy his example, and thus the evil was effectually cured.

By and by he had enlarged his schedule of labor to this: He offered to read prayers and to expound the Scriptures in French, every Saturday afternoon, to the French families settled at Highgate; which offer was thankfully accepted. The French at Savannah heard of this, and requested he would do the same for them, with which request he willingly complied. He also began to read prayers and expound in German, once a week, to the German villagers of Hampstead. His Sunday labor was as follows: 1. English prayers from five o'clock to half-past six. 2. Italian prayers at nine. 3. A sermon and the holy communion, for the English, from half-past ten to about half-past twelve. 4. The service for the French at one, including prayers, psalms, and Scripture exposition. 5. The catechising of the children at two. 6. The third English service at three. 7. After this, a meeting in his own house for reading, prayer, and praise. 8. At six, the Moravian service began, which he was glad to attend, not to teach, but learn.



Following a primitive but obsolete rubric, he would baptize children only by immersion; nor could he be induced to depart from this mode unless the parents would certify that the child was weakly.) Persons were not allowed to act as sponsors who were not communicants. No baptism was recognized as valid unless performed by a minister episcopally ordained; and those who had allowed their children to be baptized in any other manner were earnestly exhorted to have them rebaptized. His rigor extended even so far as to refuse the Lord's Supper to one of the most devout men of the settlement, who had not been baptized by an episcopally ordained minister; and the burial-service itself was denied to such as died with what he deemed unorthodox baptism.\*

Both the brothers denied themselves not only the luxuries but many of the ordinary conveniences of life, living on bread and water. They enforced the forms of the Church with a repetition and rigor that tired out the people and provoked resentment. One of the colonists said to Wesley: "I like nothing you do; all your sermons are satires upon particular persons. Besides, we are Protestants; but as for you, we cannot tell what religion you are of. We never heard of such a religion before; we know not what to make of it."

Affairs were even worse in the palmetto-huts of Frederica than at Savannah. Charles and Ingham got into trouble there very soon. Ingham says (Feb. 29th): "After morning prayers I told the people that it was the Lord's day, and therefore ought to be spent in his service; that they ought not to go a-shooting, or walking up and down in the woods; and that I would take notice of all those who did. One man answered that these were new laws in America." Some of the colonists were imprisoned, as they said, because he "made a black list," and informed on them. As for Charles, he had been baptizing children by trine immersion—plunging them three times into water—and endeavoring to reconcile scolding women. Complaint was made that he held so many "services" as to interfere with

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\*In his journal for September 29, 1749, he gives a letter from John Martin Bolzius, and adds: "What a truly Christian piety and simplicity breathe in these lines! And yet this very man, when I was at Savannah, did I refuse to admit to the Lord's table, because he was not baptized; that is, not baptized by a minister who had been episcopally ordained. Can any one carry High-church zeal higher than this? And how well have I been since beaten with mine own staff!"

the people's daily labor. Liars and tale-bearers, lax women and unprincipled men, conspired to ruin him. The governor unwisely and unjustly listened to their reports, and treated his secretary and chaplain for awhile with cruel neglect. While all the others were provided with boards to sleep upon, he was left to sleep upon the ground. His few well-wishers became afraid to speak to him, and even his washer-woman refused in future to wash his linen. An attempt was even made to assassinate him. On one occasion, after dragging himself, fevered and worn-down, to a service, he had for his congregation two presbyterians and a papist. Charles's mission to Frederica, like that of his brother at Savannah, was in the main a failure. As far as regards the great end for which the Christian ministry was instituted, they labored in vain. Why was this? The answer given by a well-instructed scribe in the kingdom of heaven is worth attention:

The principal cause of his [Charles Wesley's] want of success is doubtless to be found in the defectiveness of his theological views, and consequently of his own piety. Several of the sermons which he preached at Frederica are still extant in his own neat and elegant handwriting. In these we look in vain for correct and impressive views of the atonement and intercession of Christ, and of the offices of the Holy Spirit. It cannot here be said "Christ is all, and in all." No satisfactory answer is given to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Men are required to run the race of Christian holiness with a load of uncanceled guilt upon their consciences, and while the corruptions of their nature are unsubdued by renewing grace. The preacher has no adequate conception of a sinner's justification before God. He sometimes confounds this blessing with sanctification, and at other times he speaks of it as a something which is to take place in the day of judgment. Never does he represent it as consisting in the full and unmerited forgiveness of all past sins, obtained not by works of righteousness, but by the simple exercise of faith in a penitent state of the heart; and immediately followed by the gift of the Holy Ghost, producing peace of conscience, the filial spirit, power over all sin, and the joyous hope of eternal life. On the contrary, he satisfies himself with reproving the vices and sins of the people with unsparing severity, and with holding up the standard of practical holiness; denouncing the Divine vengeance against all who fall short of it; but without directing them to the only means by which they can obtain forgiveness and a new heart. The consequence was that the more serious part of the people were discouraged: for they were called to the hopeless task of presenting to God a spiritual service, while they were themselves the servants of sin; and of loving him with all their heart, while they were strangers to his forgiving mercy, and labored under a just apprehension of his wrath. Charles's ministry, like that of his brother, at this time did not embody those great doctrines of the evangelical dispensation which constitute "the truth as it is in Jesus," and upon which the Holy Ghost is wont to set his seal, by making them instrumental in the conversion and salvation of men.\*

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\* Jackson's Life of C. Wesley.

A writer in the *London Quarterly Review* for January, 1868, says: "We have before us a number of unpublished sermons written by John Wesley, at Oxford, during the ten years which followed his ordination. In not one of them is there any view whatever, any glimpse, afforded of Christ in any of his offices. His name occurs in the benediction—that is about all. Frequent communion is insisted on as a source of spiritual quickening; regeneration by baptism is assumed as the true doctrine of the Church; but Christ is nowhere, either in his life, his death, or his intercession."

After spending a little more than five months in Georgia, some duties connected with his secretaryship called Charles to Savannah; and from thence he was sent with dispatches to England, so that he never again visited Frederica, where he had met with such unworthy treatment. "I was overjoyed," he says, "at my deliverance out of this furnace, and not a little ashamed of myself for being so."

Leaving Ingham to take care of Savannah, and to keep up the school that consisted largely of orphans and the very poor, Wesley and his faithful layman, Delamotte, went to forsaken Frederica, and put in a few months of hard work there. At this day there is shown on the Island (St. Simons) a wide-spreading live-oak called "Wesley's Tree." Tradition has it that he preached under that tree.\*

But the Indians—what of them? It was to convert the Indians—those unsophisticated "children of nature"—that the Oxford Methodists came to America. That was their inspiring vision—not to preach to white settlers, influenced by petty jealousies and rivalries, and consisting, to a considerable extent, of reckless and unprincipled persons who had brought with them an assortment of the very European vices the "missioners" had hoped to leave behind. Ingham never lost sight of this object, and could hardly be restrained from entering on it at once. Wesley protested to the governor; but he urged that the troubles recently stirred up by the Spaniards and French made it dangerous to go among the Indians, and that it was inexpedient to

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\*Under this tree, a few years ago, a photographic group was taken of Lovick Pierce, D.D. (the oldest effective traveling preacher then in the United States, if not in the world), with his son, Bishop Pierce—a native Georgian—and Bishop Wightman, of South Carolina, and others.



leave Savannah without a minister. Wesley answered that, though the Trustees of Georgia had appointed him to the office of minister of Savannah, this was done without his solicitation, desire, or knowledge; and that he should not continue longer than his way was opened to go among the Indians.

On his first voyage, Oglethorpe had carried back to England a sample, a rare trophy—Toma-Chache, a Muskogee king, and his suite. They were presented to George II., and his court, and made a great show of, with due effect on the public mind. It was not long after the landing of our "missioners" before the royal savage called on them. Ingham's journal describes the interview:

A little after noon some Indians came to make us a visit. We put on our gowns and cassocks, spent some time in prayer, and then went into the great cabin to receive them. At our entrance they all rose up, and both men and women shook hands with us. When we were all seated, Toma-Chache, their king, spoke to us to this effect—through his interpreter, Mrs. Musgrove, a half-breed: "You are welcome. I am glad to see you here. I have a desire to hear the Great Word, for I am ignorant. When I was in England, I desired that some might speak the Great Word to us. Our nation was then willing to hear. Since that time we have been in trouble. The French on one hand, the Spaniards on the other, and the traders that are amongst us, have caused great confusion, and have set our people against hearing the Great Word. Their tongues are useless; some say one thing, and some another. But I am glad you are come." All this he spoke with much earnestness and much action, both of his head and hands. Mr. John Wesley made him a short answer: "God only can teach you wisdom, and if you be sincere, perhaps he will do it by us." We then shook hands with them again, and withdrew.

The queen made them a present of a jar of milk, and another of honey; that the missionaries might feed them, she said, with milk—for they were but children—and might be sweet to them.

Glad to get away from Frederica, Ingham is found among the Indians three months after reaching Georgia:

April 25.—We were thirty-four communicants. Our constant number is about a dozen. Next day Mr. Wesley and I went up to Cowpen in a boat bought for our use, to converse with Mrs. Musgrove about learning the Indian language. I agreed to teach her children to read, and to make her whatever recompense she would require more for her trouble. I am to spend three or four days a week with her, and the rest at Savannah, in communicating what I have learned to Mr. Wesley; because he intends, as yet, wholly to reside there. The Moravians being informed of our design, desired me to teach one of the brethren along with Mr. Wesley. To this I consented at once with my whole heart. And who, think ye, is the person intended to learn? Their lawful bishop [David Nitschman.]

April 30.—Mr. Wesley and I went up again to Cowpen, taking along with us Toma-Cache and his queen. Their town is about four miles above Savannah, in

the way to Mrs. Musgrove's. We told them we were about to learn their language. I asked them if they were willing I should teach the young prince. They consented, desiring me to check and keep him in; but not to strike him. The youth is sadly corrupted, and addicted to drunkenness.

The Indians gave to Ingham a plot of ground, in the midst of which was a small, round hill; and on the top of this hill a house was built for an Indian school. The house was named Irene. He soon formed a vocabulary of many words in the Indian language, and began an Indian grammar. An open door was set before them; more laborers were wanted, and Wesley wrote to a friend in Lincoln College (Feb. 16, 1737): "Mr. Ingham has left Savannah for some months, and lives at a house built for him a few miles off, near the Indian town. So that I have now no fellow-laborer but Mr. Delamotte, who has taken charge of between thirty and forty children. There is therefore great need that God should put it into the hearts of some to come over to us and labor with us in his harvest. But I should not desire any to come unless on the same views and conditions with us—without any temporal wages other than food and raiment, the plain conveniences of life. And for one or more, in whom was this mind, there would be full employment in the province. The difficulties he must then encounter God only knows; probably martyrdom would conclude them. But those we have hitherto met with have been small, and only terrible at a distance. Persecution, you know, is the portion of every follower of Christ, wherever his lot is cast."

Soon afterward, he writes: "It was agreed Mr. Ingham should go for England, and endeavor to bring over, if it please God, some of our friends to strengthen our hands in this work." Ingham left Savannah February 26. This is the last of him in Georgia. Arrived in England, he sought spiritual fellowship among his Christian friends in Yorkshire and Oxford, and, as opportunity offered, occupied the pulpit of the Established Church. His Methodist preaching created a sensation. A man with a soul like his—burning with zeal—could scarcely fail to be a successful evangelist. In a letter to Charles Wesley, October 22, 1737, he writes:

I have no other thoughts but of returning to America. When the time comes, I trust the Lord will show me. My heart's desire is that the Indians may hear the gospel. For this I pray both night and day. I will transcribe the Indian words as fast as I can.

Last Sunday, I preached such a sermon at Wakefield church as has set almost all about us in an uproar. Some say the devil is in me; others, that I am mad. Others say no man can live up to such doctrine, and they never heard such before; others, again, extol me to the sky. I believe, indeed, it went to the hearts of several persons; for I was enabled to speak with great authority and power; and I preached almost the whole sermon without book. There was a vast congregation, and tears fell from many eyes.

Ingham is evidently studying, and mindful of the people about Irene and Cowpens. Oglethorpe tried to get Charles to return. John meant to stay, and was arranging for his sister Keszzy to come out and keep house for him. Whitefield was preparing to come to his help. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." As Wesley came to America so he left it, "contrary to all preceding resolutions." In four weeks from the date of the above letter, he had left Georgia forever.\* The Creeks or Muskogees, the Choctaws and Chickasaws, the Uchees and Cherokees, dwelt in the country lying between the thin strip of white settlements on the Atlantic and Gulf coast, and the Mississippi River. They were shy of the white man; but Wesley lost no opportunity of seeing and interviewing them and their occasional representatives—of hearing, through traders, of their numbers, customs, and worship: what he saw and heard doubtless modified his views, but did not abate his desire for the conversion of the Indians. He died without the sight. Methodism was to be honored of God in giving the gospel and a Christian

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\* Wesley's excessive pastoral fidelity and his ritualistic severity made enemies, and they found occasion to avenge themselves in an affair connected with one of his parishioners, Miss H——. It seems he thought of proposing marriage to her; but Delamotte warned him, and the Moravians advised him "to proceed no farther in the matter." Wesley answered: "The will of the Lord be done." The lady's uncle, Causton, of bad record, and then in brief authority, some time afterward hatched up indictments—ten bills, some civil and some ecclesiastical—against him. Wesley was prepared to answer, and moved for an immediate hearing: but the court evaded his request. From September 1, when the indictments were first presented, to the end of November, when Wesley made known his intention to return to England, he seems to have attended not fewer than seven different sittings of the court, asking to be tried on the matters over which it had jurisdiction, but denying its right to take cognizance of the ecclesiastical offenses alleged. Thus harassed and obstructed—power being in the hands of his enemies, and he unable and they unwilling to reach an issue—he gave notice of leaving, and left. This was what they wanted. Causton, the chief power in Oglethorpe's absence, came to disgrace and grief in a twelve-month, being turned out of all his offices. The enemies of Wesley and of Methodism have sedulously endeavored, but in vain, to fix a blot upon him in this matter.



civilization to the Indians, but not then. Its instruments were not ready. Its Pentecost had not come. By a way that Wesley knew not God would bring it about; and in less than a century, Methodist preachers would have schools among those very tribes in which Indian children would be learning the Wesleyan Catechism, and thousands of Indian members under their pastoral care would make the Western wilds rejoice as, in their own language, they sang Wesleyan hymns.

This vision was not granted the missionary, and he left with his enemies exulting and his friends sad. He himself was saddest of all, for his mission seemed a failure. These are his reflections on the way back to England:

Many reasons I have to bless God for my having been carried to America, contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby, I trust, he hath in some measure "*humbled me and proved me, and shown me what was in my heart.*" Hereby, I have been taught to "*beware of men.*" Hereby, God has given me to know many of his servants, particularly those of the Church of Herrnhut. Hereby, my passage is open to the writings of holy men, in the German, Spanish, and Italian tongues. All in Georgia have heard the word of God, and some have believed and begun to run well. A few steps have been taken toward publishing the glad tidings both to the African and American heathens. Many children have learned how they ought to serve God, and to be useful to their neighbor. And those whom it most concerns have an opportunity of knowing the state of their infant colony, and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness to many generations.

When Whitefield arrived in Georgia, a reaction had taken place, and he wrote: "The good Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people; and he has laid a foundation that I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to shake. O that I may follow him as he followed Christ!" John Wesley's latest and best historian thus concludes the account: "Who could have imagined that, in one hundred and thirty years, this huge wilderness would be transformed into one of the greatest nations upon earth? and that the Methodism, begun at Savannah, would pervade the continent, and, ecclesiastically considered, become the mightiest power existing?"

## CHAPTER VIII.

Whitefield: His Conversion and Preaching; Goes to Savannah—Orphan Asylum:  
What was Accomplished by this Charity.

WHITEFIELD had sailed for Georgia a few hours before the vessel which brought Wesley back to England cast anchor. The ships passed in sight of each other, but neither knew that so dear a friend was on the deck at which he was gazing. When Wesley landed he learned that his coadjutor was on board the vessel in the offing. It was still possible to communicate with him; and Whitefield was not a little surprised at receiving a letter which contained these words: "When I saw God by the wind which was carrying you out brought me in, I asked counsel of God. His answer you have inclosed." The inclosure was a slip of paper with this sentence: "Let him return to London." He betook himself to prayer. The story of the prophet in the book of Kings came forcibly to his recollection—how he turned back from his appointed course because another prophet told him it was the will of the Lord that he should do so, and for that reason a lion met him by the way and slew him. So he proceeded on his voyage.\*

A new power has been developed in this Oxford Methodist. He has undergone a great change. The departure of Wesley left Whitefield at the head of the Methodist band or Holy Club of the university, and left him also trying to establish his own righteousness after the then Methodist style. The last glimpse we had of his experience, he was not behind the best of them in that way. (Reading a treatise lent him by Charles Wesley, he found it asserted that true religion is a union of the soul with God, by the Spirit.) A ray of divine light, he says, instantaneously darted in upon him, and from that moment he knew he must be a new creature. To use his own words: "Up

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\* Wesley doubting, from his own experience, whether his friend could be so usefully employed in America as in England, had referred the question to lot, and this was the lot which he had drawn. Whitefield afterward rebuked him: "It is plain you had a wrong lot given you here, and justly, because you tempted God in drawing one." He was at that time addicted to the Moravian practice of sortilege, in perplexed anxieties for the right way.

to that time I knew no more that I must be born again than if I had never been born at all." In seeking, however, to attain the peace that passeth all understanding, his vehemence and ardency of character betrayed him into many ill-judged proceedings and ascetic follies.

Whitefield preceded the Wesleys in obtaining the "assurance of faith," which they had sought together so arduously before they parted. But, like them, he passed through an ordeal of agonizing self-conflicts; he followed out many false courses, and exhausted many remedies; and thus seems to have been prepared to guide and comfort others. Whenever he knelt down to pray, he felt great pressure both in soul and body, and often prayed under the weight of it till the sweat dripped from his face. "God only knows," he writes, "how many nights I have lain upon my bed groaning under what I felt." He kept Lent so strictly that, except on Saturdays and Sundays, his only food was coarse bread and sage-tea without sugar. The end of this was that before the termination of forty days he had scarcely strength enough left to creep up-stairs, and was under a physician for many weeks. At the close of the severe illness which he had thus brought on himself, a happy change of mind confirmed his returning health. It may best be related in his own words:

Notwithstanding my fit of sickness continued six or seven weeks, I trust I shall have reason to bless God for it through the endless ages of eternity; for, about the end of the seventh week, after having undergone innumerable buffetings of Satan, and many months' inexpressible trials, by night and by day, under the spirit of bondage, God was pleased at length to remove the heavy load, to enable me to lay hold on his dear Son by a living faith, and by giving me the Spirit of adoption, to seal me, as I humbly hope, even to the day of everlasting redemption. But O with what joy—joy unspeakable, even joy that was full of and big with glory—was my soul filled when the weight of sin went off; and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God, and a full assurance of faith, broke in upon my disconsolate soul! Surely it was the day of my espousals—a day to be had in everlasting remembrance. At first my joys were like a spring-tide, and, as it were, overflowed the banks. Go where I would I could not avoid singing of psalms almost aloud; afterward they became more settled, and, blessed be God, saving a few casual intervals, have abode and increased in my soul ever since.

The Wesleys at this time were in Georgia; and some person who feared lest the little society which they had formed at Oxford should be broken up and totally dissolved, for want of a superintendent, had written to Sir John Philips, of London, who



was ready to assist in religious works with his purse, and recommended Whitefield as a proper person to be encouraged and patronized, more especially for this purpose. Sir John immediately gave him an annuity of £20, and promised to make it £30 if he would continue at Oxford; for if it could be leavened with the vital spirit of religion, it would be like medicating the waters at their spring. He accepted the situation, and filled it well. His illness rendered it expedient for him to change air, and he went accordingly to his native city where, laying aside all other books, he devoted himself to the study of the Holy Scriptures, reading them upon his knees, and praying over every line and word. (The Bishop of Gloucester perceived his talents and earnest spirit, and proffered him ordination, notwithstanding he said that he had resolved to ordain no one under three and twenty years, and Whitefield was only twenty-one.)

He prepared himself for the ceremony by fasting and prayer, and spent two hours the previous evening on his knees in the neighboring fields, making supplication for himself and those who were to be ordained with him. At the ordination he consecrated himself to an apostolic life. "I trust," he writes, "I answered to every question from the bottom of my heart, and heartily prayed that God might say, Amen. If my vile heart doth not deceive me, I offered up my whole spirit, soul, and body to the service of God's sanctuary. Let come what will, life or death, depth or height, I shall henceforward live like one who this day, in the presence of men and angels, took the holy sacrament upon the profession of being inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon me that ministration in the Church."

The good bishop gave him five guineas — "a great supply," wrote Whitefield, "for one who had not a guinea in the world." His first sermon revealed at once his extraordinary powers. His journal gives this account: "Last Sunday, in the afternoon, I preached my first sermon in the church where I was baptized, and also first received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Curiosity drew a large congregation together. The sight at first a little awed me. But I was comforted with a heart-felt sense of the Divine presence, and soon found the advantage of having been accustomed to public speaking when a boy at school, and of exhorting and teaching the prisoners and poor people at their private houses, whilst at the university. By these means I was kept from being

daunted overmuch. As I proceeded, I perceived the fire kindled, till at last, though so young, and amidst a crowd of those who knew me in my childish days, I trust I was enabled to speak with some degree of gospel authority."

Some mocked: many were awakened. It was reported to the bishop that fifteen of his hearers had gone mad. He wished that the madness might not pass away before another Sunday. That same week Whitefield returned to Oxford, took his degree, and continued to visit the prisoners, and inspect two or three charity schools which were supported by the Methodists. With this state of life he was contented, and thought of continuing in the university, at least for some years, that he might complete his studies, and do good among the gowmsmen—to convert one of them being deemed, by some, as much as converting a parish. From thence, however, he was invited to officiate at the Tower chapel, in London, during the absence of the curate. It was a summons which he obeyed with fear and trembling; but he was soon made sensible of his power; for though the first time he entered a pulpit in the metropolis the congregation seemed disposed to sneer at his youth, they grew serious during his discourse, showed him great tokens of respect as he came down, and blessed him as he passed along, while inquiry was made on every side, from one to another, Who is he?

While he was in London, letters from Ingham and the Wesleys made him long to follow them to Georgia; but when he opened these desires to his friends, they persuaded him that laborers were wanted at home. He now learned that Charles Wesley had come over to procure assistance; and though Charles did not invite him to the undertaking, yet he wrote in terms which made it evident that he was in his thoughts, as a proper person. Soon afterward came a letter from John: "Only Mr. Delamotte is with me," said he, "till God shall stir up the hearts of some of his servants, who, putting their lives in his hands, shall come over and help us, where the harvest is so great and the laborers so few. What if thou art the man, Mr. Whitefield?" In another letter it was said: "Do you ask me what you shall have? Food to eat, and raiment to put on; a house to lay your head in, such as your Lord had not; and a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Upon reading this, his heart leaped within him, and echoed to the call. The desire thus formed soon ripened into

a purpose, and fearing that it would never be carried into effect if he "conferred with flesh and blood," he wrote to his relations at Gloucester, telling them his design, and that if they would promise not to dissuade him, he would visit them to take his leave; otherwise he would embark without seeing them, for he knew his own weakness. But the promise extorted was not strictly observed; his aged mother wept sorely; and others, who had no such cause to justify their interference, represented to him what "preferment" he might have if he would stay at home.\*

Whitefield's leave-takings proved to be great awakenings, especially in Gloucester and Bristol. Crowds attended week-day services such as Sundays had not brought together. His piety was fed with deep meditations, and his eloquence broke upon congregations with wondrous power. "Sometimes, as I have been walking," he says, "my soul would make such sallies that I thought it would go out of the body. At other times I would be so overpowered with a sense of God's infinite majesty that I would be constrained to throw myself prostrate on the ground, and offer my soul as a blank in his hands, to write on it what he pleased."

On his last visit to Bristol people came out on foot to meet him, and some in coaches, a mile without the city. He preached about five times a week. All classes, and all denominations, from Quakers to High-churchmen, flocked to hear him. "The whole city," he wrote, "seemed to be alarmed." "The word was sharper than a two-edged sword, and the doctrine of the new birth made its way like lightning in the hearers' consciences." "Some hung upon the rails of the organ-loft, others climbed upon the leads of the church, and all together made the church so hot with their breath that the steam would fall from the pillars like drops of rain." When he said that perhaps they might see his face no more, high and low, young and old, burst into tears. After the sermon multitudes followed him home weeping. The next day he was employed from seven in the morning till midnight in talking and giving spiritual advice to awakened hearers; and he left Bristol secretly in the middle of the night, to avoid being escorted by horsemen and coaches out of the town.†

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\*The device upon Whitefield's seal was a winged heart soaring above the globe, and the motto, *Astra petamus*. †Memoirs of Rev. Geo. Whitefield, by J. Gillies, D.D.



At Oxford, Whitefield had an agreeable interview with the other Methodists, and came to London about the end of August to prepare for his voyage. The time of his detention was fully employed in the pulpits of the metropolis. When he assisted at the eucharist, the consecration of the elements had to be twice or thrice repeated. The managers of charitable institutions were eager to obtain his services; for that purpose they procured the liberty of the churches on week-days, and thousands went away from the largest churches, not being able to get in. The congregations were all attention, and seemed to hear as for eternity. He preached generally nine times a week, and often helped to administer the sacrament early on the Lord's-day, when the streets might be seen filled with people going to church with lanterns in their hands, and conversing about the things of God.\*

As his popularity increased, opposition began to arise, but he left before it took form. Some of the clergy became angry; two of them told him they would not let him preach in their pulpits any more, unless he renounced that part of the preface of his sermon on "Regeneration" (lately published), wherein he wished "that his brethren would entertain their auditors oftener with discourses upon the new birth."

(Wesley was approaching the coast of England while Whitefield was preparing for his embarkation; "and now, when Whitefield, having excited this powerful sensation in London, had departed for Georgia, to the joy of those who dreaded the excesses of his zeal, no sooner had he left the metropolis than Wesley arrived there, to deepen and widen the impression which Whitefield had made.) Had their measures been concerted they could not more entirely have accorded."† And Whitefield supplied in America the very element that Wesley's ministry lacked. He was not an organizer; he was not an ecclesiastical legislator; he was preëminently a preacher—a loving, melting, saving preacher. In both hemispheres, but especially in America, starting out from and returning to Georgia in many successive trips, he was to be the evangelist, preparing the way for Methodism.‡ It was appointed him to *preach*; he did not spend his strength in defending the word of God, but in proclaiming it. He drew crowds, and before a crowd of drowsy worldlings had no equal. His figure was tall and his gesture striking. Marvelous things were

\* Tyerman. † Wesley and Methodism. ‡ Dr. Stevens.

told of the compass and sweetness of his voice.\* His eyes were blue and luminous, though small, and a slight squint in one of them, caused by the measles, is said not to have "lessened the uncommon sweetness" of his countenance. His humble origin enabled him to understand and address the common people, who, while admiring that natural grace which rendered him at home in aristocratic circles, felt that he was one from among themselves. More than all, his soul was on fire. The unction of the Holy One rested on him. An ignorant man returning from hearing him said, "He preached like a lion." In later years, Wesley, listening to him, and observing the effect of his sermon, wrote: "Even the little improprieties, both of his language and manner, were the means of profiting many, who would not have been touched by a more correct discourse, or a more calm and regular manner of preaching."

The ship on which Whitefield sailed was full of soldiers. The captain of the ship and the officers of the regiment, and a young cadet, gave him to understand that they looked upon him as a hypocrite, and for awhile treated him as such. Card-playing and profanity were prevalent, and his reproofs were scoffed at. The voyage was long. He tried what he could do between decks, preaching daily to his red-coat parishioners, as he called them. A fever broke out and went through the ship. The Methodist plan was in place—doing good to the bodies and souls of men—and he followed it. For many days and nights he visited between twenty and thirty sick persons—crawling between decks—administering medicines or cordials to them, and such advice as seemed suitable to their circumstances. One day he said to the military captain that "though he was a volunteer on board, yet, as he was on board, he looked upon himself as his chaplain, and as such he thought it a little odd to pray and preach to the servants and not to the master;" and added that "if he thought proper he would make use of a short collect now and then to him and the other gentlemen in the great cabin." After pausing awhile and shaking his head, he answered, "I think we may when we have nothing else to do."†

Before the voyage was through, the two captains were quite

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\*Garriek, with allowable exaggeration, said Whitefield could make his hearers weep or shout with exultation, merely by his varied pronunciation of the word *Mesopotamia*. † Memoirs of Whitefield, by Gillies.

brought over. Captain Mackay desired that Mr. Whitefield would not give himself the trouble of expounding and praying in the cabin and between decks, for he would order a drum to beat morning and evening, and he himself would attend with the soldiers on the deck. This produced a very agreeable alternation—they were now as regular as in a church. Whitefield preached with a captain on each side of him, and soldiers all around; and the two other ships' companies, being now in the trade-winds, drew near and joined in the worship of God. The great cabin now became a *Bethel*; both captains were daily more and more affected—a crucified Saviour and the things pertaining to the kingdom of God were the usual topics of their conversation. Once, after sermon, Captain Mackay desired the soldiers to stop, whilst he informed them that to his great shame he had been a notorious swearer, but by the instrumentality of Mr. Whitefield's preaching he had now left it off, and exhorted them, for Christ's sake, to go and do likewise. The effect may be imagined.

There was a reformation throughout the whole soldiery. The women cried, "What a change in our captain!" The bad books and packs of cards which Whitefield exchanged for Bibles and other religious books (abundance of which were given him to dispense by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) were thrown overboard. The cadet, who was a cabin-passenger, being "wounded deeply," told Mr. Whitefield the history of his life, and informed the captain of his desire to leave the army, and return to his original intention of devoting himself to the ministry. The soldiers stood forth of evenings and submitted like children to being catechised on the exposition of the morning lesson.

They landed the beginning of May, 1738. After preaching a farewell sermon to his converts on the sea and his red-coat parishioners, Whitefield arrived at Savannah on the seventh, and entered upon his "little foreign cure."

Whitefield soon found he had no mission to the Indians; the romance about these "children of nature" disappeared on sight of the situation. Of the unkindness done to Wesley he heard, but did not embroil himself in the strife. His manner and spirit opened his way to all the colonists. He contracted an intimacy with the Saltzburg pastor, Bolzius, whom his predecessor had



repelled from the sacrament because he had not been baptized by an episcopally ordained minister. He writes:

Through Divine mercy, I met with respectful treatment from magistrates, officers, and people. The first I visited now and then; the others, besides preaching twice a day and four times on the Lord's-day, I visited from house to house. I was in general most cordially received, but from time to time found that *cælum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*. [People do not change their disposition by crossing the sea.] Among some of these, the event, however, proved that the word took effectual root. I was really happy in my little foreign cure, and could have cheerfully remained among them had I not been obliged to return to England, to receive priest's orders and make a beginning toward laying a foundation to the Orphan-house.

He found many orphan children among the colonists, and projected an asylum for them. Their condition was peculiarly helpless and their number likely to increase. The scheme of Professor Franke, of Germany, was in his mind as a model; but the differences between old and thickly-settled Halle and Savannah were not taken into account. A more practical man would call the plan a bad one, both in location and operation; but if it did little good to the orphans, it did a great deal of good to the Church and to the world. It helped to secure the perpetual itinerancy of Whitefield. He was kept going the rest of his life, to build and then to support the orphanage; and as he went, he preached; and the results of his preaching can never die. The benevolent but ill-judged scheme was one of those mysterious burdens which Providence sometimes allows good men to take up, who move steadier and go faster for the load they carry. The ideal is noble and elevating, but its benefits are in the contemplation rather than in the realization. (He ranged from north to south along our coast, and ~~thirteen times crossed the Atlantic~~, pleading for his Bethesda.) The Savannah orphanage on one continent and the London Tabernacle on the other were the focal points of a wide movement, and made him the almoner and the evangelist of the English-speaking world.

Parting affectionately with his flock, Whitefield embarked at Charleston, September 6th, 1738, and returned in time to render important services to Methodism in the mother-country.

## CHAPTER IX.

Wesley's Experience; His Reflections—Peter Böhler: His Doctrine and Life—  
Conversion of the Two Brothers: Effect Upon Their Ministry.

ON his arrival in London (Feb. 3, 1738), and without delay, John Wesley visited Oglethorpe, and waited upon the Georgian trustees; gave to them a written account why he had left the colony, and returned to them the instrument whereby they had appointed him minister of Savannah. While on his way to England, upon the bosom of the great deep, his "mind was full of thought," and in the fullness of his heart he made the following entry in his private journal: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but O who shall convert me? who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well—nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near; but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, 'To die is gain.'

I have a sin of fear that, when I've spun  
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore.

I think, verily, if the gospel be true, I am safe; for I not only have given, and do give, all my goods to feed the poor; I not only give my body to be burned, drowned, or whatever God shall appoint for me; but I follow after charity (though not as I ought, yet as I can), if haply I may attain it. I *now* believe the gospel is true. I show my faith by my works, by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever sees me sees I would be a Christian."

By the most infallible of proofs, he tells us—that of his own consciousness—he was convinced of his having "no such faith in Christ" as prevented his heart from being troubled; and he earnestly prays to be "saved by such a faith as implies peace in life and death." He did not apprehend the promise, "A new heart also will I *give* you." To attain to a state of entire sanctification was with him the great business of life; he aimed at a high standard of personal holiness; but in the process of this work, his references to the grace of the Holy Spirit were rather

casual and indirect than indicative of an entire dependence upon his presence and agency. A few days afterward, standing again on English soil, he makes in his journal this record of his inward struggles, this estimate of his spiritual condition:

It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgia Indians the nature of Christianity; but what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I the least of all suspected), that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. "I am not mad," though I thus speak, but "I speak the words of truth and soberness;" if haply some of those who still dream may awake and see that as I am so are they. Are they read in philosophy? So was I. In ancient or modern tongues? So was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? The very same could I do. Are they plenteous in alms? Behold, I give all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give of their labor as well as of their substance? I have labored more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to suffer for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country; I have put my life in my hand, wandering into strange lands; I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God should please to bring upon me. But does all this (be it more or less, it matters not) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did or can know, say, give, do, or suffer, justify me in his sight? Yea, or the constant use of all the means of grace (which, nevertheless, is meet, right, and our bounden duty)? Or that I know nothing of myself; that I am, as touching outward, moral righteousness, blameless? Or (to come closer yet) the having a rational conviction of all the truths of Christianity? Does all this give me a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a Christian? By no means. If the oracles of God are true, if we are still to abide by "the law and the testimony," all these things, though when ennobled by faith in Christ they are holy, and just, and good, yet without it are "dung and dross," meet only to be purged away by "the fire that never shall be quenched." This, then, have I learned in the ends of the earth—that I "am fallen short of the glory of God;" that my whole heart is "altogether corrupt and abominable," and, consequently, my whole life (seeing it cannot be that an "evil tree" should "bring forth good fruit"); that "alienated" as I am from the life of God, I am "a child of wrath," an heir of hell; that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins which "are more in number than the hairs of my head," that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves, or they cannot abide his righteous judgment; that "having the sentence of death" in my heart, and having nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope but that of being justified freely "through the redemption that is in Jesus;" I have no hope but that if I seek I shall find Christ, and "be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

If it be said that I have faith (for many such things have I heard from many miserable comforters), I answer, So have the devils—a sort of faith—but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. So the apostles had even at Cana in



Galilee, when Jesus first "manifested forth his glory;" even then they in a sort "believed on him," but they had not then "the faith that overcometh the world." The faith I want is "a sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favor of God." I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans—that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out: "I live not, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it (though many imagine they have it who have it not); for whosoever hath it is "freed from sin," the whole "body of sin is destroyed" in him; he is freed from fear, "having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God." And he is freed from doubt, "having the love of God shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him;" which "Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit that he is a child of God."

Wesley had been in the Christian ministry for twelve or thirteen years, and having tried legalism and ritualism to the utmost, he found no health in them. He is now ready to be "taught the way of the Lord more perfectly;" and the Lord has prepared a teacher. At the very time when, harassed by persecution and perplexed as to the state of his heart, he resolved to return to his native land, the heads of the Moravian Church in Germany were making arrangements to send a pious and gifted evangelist to America, directing him to pass through England. Little did they imagine what consequences would arise out of the fulfillment of their plans. The hand of God was in it. The man selected for this service was Peter Böhler, who arrived in London just in time to impart the evangelical instruction which Wesley and his brother so greatly needed. The sons of the Anglican Church applied to the son of the Moravian: "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out."

More than three hundred years had passed since the Council of Constance had burned at the stake the two noblest men of Bohemian history—Jerome and Huss. For a long time the people of Moravia and Bohemia had held principles that, in Luther's time, became Protestantism. John Huss and Jerome of Prague (martyred in 1415) were reformers before the Reformation. The latter, after leaving the University of Prague, visited Oxford, and imbibed Wycliffe's principles while copying his works. This ante-Lutheran reformation, though repressed by vigilant and cruel persecutions, was not extinguished. Many families lingered in Bohemia and Moravia from generation to generation,

retaining, in humble obscurity, the truth for which the Constance martyrs had died. The papal persecutors deemed that in destroying Jerome and Huss they had extinguished the new movement on the continent of Europe; but a spark from the stake of Constance lighted up at last the flame of Methodism in England and America.

The formal organization of *Unitas Fratrum*, or Unity of the Brethren (as the Moravian Church calls itself), may be dated in 1467, when their Society became an independent Church, and their ministry was instituted—the Waldensian Bishop, Stephen, consecrating to the episcopal office three men who had been sent to him for that purpose by the Moravian Conference or Synod. Toward the close of the fifteenth century, a Bohemian version of the Bible was published. In the sixteenth century, they sent several deputations to Luther, but were deterred from joining the Lutheran or Calvinistic Churches because of the civil entanglements and worldly elements connected with them. At their last interview the great reformer bid them Godspeed, and took leave of them in these words: "Do you be the apostles of the Bohemians, as I and my brethren will be apostles of the Germans." In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the prosperity of the Brethren was at its highest. The *Unitas Fratrum* was composed of three provinces—the Moravian, the Bohemian, and the Polish—each governed by its own bishops and conferences, but all confederated as one Church, holding General Conferences in common. Then began persecutions more vigorous than ever before known. The *Unitas Fratrum*, as a recognized organization, disappeared from the eyes of the world, and remained as a "hidden seed" for nearly a century. In Moravia many families secretly maintained the views of their fathers. Among these a religious awakening took place in the first quarter of the eighteenth century under Christian David's preaching, which was followed by the usual persecutions; and several Moravians escaped from their native country with David, and found refuge at Berthelsdorf, an estate in Saxony belonging to Count Zinzendorf. This pious nobleman kindly received them, and other Moravians soon joined them. They built a town, and called it Herrnhut; introduced the discipline and perpetuated the ministry of *Unitas Fratrum*, and in this way the ancient Church was "RENEWED."

Christian David, an earnest-minded carpenter, led the little company to a piece of land near a mound (the Hutberg or Watch-hill), where, lifting his ax, he cleaved a tree, exclaiming: "Here hath the sparrow found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts!" In June, 1722, the first tree was cut down; in October, the exiles entered their new home. "The renewed Church of the Brethren" dates from the foundation of Herrnhut, and in 1732 the infant community, then numbering about six hundred members, first essayed to fulfill the final charge of our ascending Lord by sending out its messengers to the distant nations of the earth.\* Most of them poor and destitute exiles, this feeble band of heroic men sent out, during the short period of nine or ten years, missionaries to Greenland, to the West Indies, to the Indians of North America, to Lapland, to Tartary, to Algiers, to Guinea, to the Cape of Good Hope, and to the Island of Ceylon. Having been nearly extinguished in

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\*The "Brethren," both in America and in Europe, never increased as did many other denominations of Christians. The fundamental principle underlying the efforts of Zinzendorf and his coadjutors, on behalf of the Church at home, was Spener's idea of *ecclesiæ in ecclesiâ*—little churches within the Church—households of faith whose members should be separated as much as possible from the world, and which should constitute retreats where men could hold undisturbed communion with God. This idea, begun at Herrnhut, resulted in the establishment of Moravian settlements—that is, towns founded by the Church, where no one who is not a member was permitted to own real estate, although strangers, complying with the rules of the community, were allowed to lease houses. A system so exclusive kept the Church small, although it was of great advantage in other respects, and served to foster the missionary zeal which has distinguished the Moravians. The last General Synod, held at Herrnhut in 1857, remodeled the constitution, and opened the way for a more general development of the resources of the Church in the home field. The *Unitas Fratrum* now consists of three provinces—the American, Continental, and British—which govern themselves in all provincial matters, but are confederated as one Church in respect to general principles of doctrine and practice, and the prosecution of the foreign mission work. Each province has a Synod. For the general government of the three provinces and the foreign missions there is a General Synod, which meets every ten or twelve years, and to which each province sends the same number of delegates. The executive board of the General Synod is called the "Unity's Elders' Conference," and is the highest judicatory for the whole *Unitas Fratrum*, when that Synod is not in session. In the American province there are two districts. The seat of government for the Northern District is at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; and for the Southern, at Salem, North Carolina. The home Church in 1860 numbered 19,633 members, while there were 312 missionaries in the foreign field (not counting native assistants), and 74,538 converts.—*Appleton's Cyclopædia*.



the persecutions of the seventeenth century, they took measures, by planting their Church in many lands, that defied general suppression for the future.

Zinzendorf, a Lutheran, was converted to the faith of his exile-guests, relinquished all worldly honors, became a bishop of the "Brethren," and devoted his life and estate to their service. His first episcopal act was to ordain Peter Böhler (Dec. 16, 1737) as pastor of the infant church at Savannah and evangelist to the negroes of Carolina, with official instructions to visit Oxford, on his way to the distant field of labor.

Peter Böhler was born at Frankfort, 1712. He was educated in the University of Jena, where he also studied theology. When sixteen years of age, he joined the Moravians. His boyhood, though not unchecked by the monitions of conscience, nor destitute of vigorous efforts after a purer morality, was wild and wicked. Böhler's associates at Frankfort were not helpful to him, either in intellectual pursuits or the discipline of the heart. He speaks of them as "his gormandizing, tippling, and fighting countrymen." Several members of the roystering band having been recently transferred to Jena, his spiritual danger was extreme. Happily, a pious student, afterward a bishop, who had come to Jena a few days before the arrival of his friend, was so disgusted with the state of morals that he had sought refuge with the "Brethren;" and when Böhler reached the post-house, at one in the morning, he found Baumeister in attendance, to conduct him to the house where their religious meetings were held. Böhler, without any definite purpose, followed him to the place; and when in the early morning he was assailed by the importunities of the godless party, who besought him to leave the persecuted pietists, he was deaf to their entreaties and their taunts, and felt as though "restrained by an invisible hand."

One day Böhler attended a meeting held by Spangenberg, then a professor in the university, in which he commented on a pamphlet of Spener's. A sentence expressive of the Saviour's power to free from all sin caught the ear of Böhler. The effect was instantaneous. "I have tried every thing in the world excepting this!" exclaimed the conscience-stricken student; "but this I will try." Retiring to the house of the pious deacon, where he had secured lodgings, and found a welcome retreat from the scoffs and profanity of the witlings and skeptics who unhappily

abounded, he resolved to seek the blessing of forgiveness in the evangelical mode of which Spangenberg had been the faithful expositor. After combating a perilous temptation to procrastinate, he, on the following Saturday, cast himself, in the spirit of genuine penitence, at the Saviour's feet; and, while engaged in secret prayer, he was enabled to believe upon the Son of God, and immediately realized the peace and joy he had so long and so earnestly desired.

His conversion produced the legitimate effects. The witness of the Spirit was his joyful experience; the New Testament was his favorite study, and furnished him weapons of defense against scoffers. From various causes the number of the "associated students" had been reduced to nine; and at their request Zinzendorf appeared, to reorganize the little band. It was during the visit of the Count to Jena in 1732 that the life-long attachment between him and Böhler was formed. Between the two a most sacred vow was made that they would be true to the cause and service of their common Lord even to the death.

By the direction of his father he removed to Leipsic—perhaps to escape "enthusiasm;" but his residence at Leipsic was brief; and from causes which do not appear, he shortly returned to Jena. Here his influence in promoting spiritual good was extensive and powerful. The little band of nine increased to one hundred, of whom more than half joined the Moravian Church. Many of these reappear as evangelists and pastors in distant lands.

On recovering from an attack of fever, Böhler paid his first visit to Herrnhut; and, while preaching "with a warm and melted heart," Schulius Richter, whom we shall meet in Georgia, was led to the Saviour. Taking leave of his Jena friends in a love-feast, attended by many to whom he had been the instrument of salvation, and followed by their prayers and tears, Böhler set out for London, where he arrived early in February, 1738, accompanied by two of his brethren. On the day of his arrival, John Wesley delivered to him a letter addressed to Zinzendorf, from John Toltschig, a Moravian minister, whose acquaintance Wesley had formed in Savannah.

Wesley's journal notices the event:

February 7th. A day much to be remembered. At the house of Mr. Weiantz, a Dutch merchant, I met Peter Böhler, Schulius Richter, and Wensel Neiser, just then landed from Germany. Finding they had no acquaintance in England,

I offered to procure for them a lodging, and did so, near Mr. Hutton's, where I then was. And from this time I did not willingly lose any opportunity of conversing with them while I staid in London.

Peter Böhler did not finally leave London till the beginning of May; and during this interval he was very active in his efforts to do good. Many were awakened and not a few converted under his plain and scriptural teaching. His instrumentality in bringing the Wesleys to right views and sound experience may be seen by a few notices from his private papers, and brief extracts from the journals of the two brothers—both of whom being in the same condition, Böhler's counsel was as applicable to the one as to the other. Doubtless, the nature of the faith by means of which the penitent sinner receives justification, and which is followed by the assurance of the Divine favor—that faith which Böhler had exercised in his private room at Jena, but which the Wesleys had not yet put forth—formed the central topic of discourse.\*

Charles became Böhler's teacher in English; but meantime conversation was not restrained with the foreigner. John spoke German, and the two brothers, for five or six years, had been accustomed to converse in Latin when by themselves, and here Böhler was at home. What transpired between the 7th and 17th of February is at best matter of conjecture; but on the latter day the two brothers and their German friend proceeded by coach to Oxford. The reproach which had been formerly endured, now revived; and even as they walked through the squares of the colleges, they became the occasion of derisive laughter. Böhler, perceiving that Wesley was troubled chiefly for his sake, said, with a smile, "*Mi frater, non adhaeret vestibus.*" [My brother, it does not even stick to our clothes.]

"All this time," observes John Wesley, "I conversed much with Peter Böhler; but I understood him not, and least of all when he said, '*Mi frater, mi frater, excoquenda est ista tua philosophia.*'" [My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away.] During the journey, Böhler's mind had been painfully exercised. He writes to Zinzendorf: "I traveled with the two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, from London to Oxford. The elder, John, is a good-natured man; he knew he

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\* Memorials of the Life of Peter Böhler, by Rev. J. P. Lockwood; with an introduction by Rev. Thos. Jackson. London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1868.



did not properly believe on the Saviour, and was willing to be taught. His brother is at present very much distressed in his mind, but does not know how he shall begin to be acquainted with the Saviour. Our mode of believing in the Saviour is so easy to Englishmen that they cannot reconcile themselves to it; if it were a little more artful, they would sooner find their way into it."

Böhler's powers of conversation were attractive. Escorted by a graduate, he proceeded to examine the university library; and after spending half an hour amidst its literary treasures, he addressed his learned companion in the Latin tongue, and kept him spell-bound for two hours, as he discoursed on "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Blessings attended his interpreted discourses both in London and Oxford, and a work was begun, says Wesley, "such as will never come to an end, till heaven and earth pass away." In his instructions to visit the ancient seat of learning, we recognize the guidance of "Him who holdeth the seven stars in his right-hand," who has made the spiritual interests of his Church the object of his ceaseless care, and whose prerogative it is to select, prepare, and bless the agents employed for its revival and prosperity.

John returned to preach in London and to visit his mother, leaving his brother both tutor and pupil to the German evangelist. Charles records in his journal, under February 22: "I had some close conversation with Peter Böhler. He talked much of the necessity of prayer and faith." A few days afterward, the bard of Methodism was nigh unto death from pleurisy. Böhler was at his bedside. The journal continues:

I asked him to pray for me. He seemed unwilling at first; but beginning very faintly, he raised his voice by degrees, and prayed for my recovery with a strange confidence. He asked me, "Do you hope to be saved?" "Yes." "For what reason do you hope it?" "Because I have used my best endeavors to serve God." He shook his head, and said no more. I thought him very uncharitable, saying in my heart: "What, are not my endeavors a sufficient ground of hope? Would he rob me of my endeavors? I have nothing else to trust to."

John's journal says: "Thursday morning, March 2d, a message that my brother Charles was dying at Oxford obliged me to set out for that place immediately." He reached the lodgings of his afflicted brother on Saturday, March 4th, and writes: "I found my brother at Oxford, recovering from his pleurisy; and with him Peter Böhler—by whom, in the hands of the great God, I

was on Sunday, the 5th, clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of faith whereby alone we can be saved."

From Böhler we learn that the event so fraught with future blessings occurred during a quiet evening walk. "I took a walk with the elder Wesley, and asked him about his spiritual state."

Good seed having been sown among students and citizens in Oxford, the work is resumed in London. On Thursday, March 23d, Wesley wrote thus in his journal: "I met Peter again, who now amazed me more and more by the accounts he gave of the fruits of living faith—the holiness and happiness which he affirmed to attend it. The next morning I began the Greek Testament again, resolving to abide by 'the law and the testimony,' and being confident that God would hereby show me whether this doctrine was of God." On the first of the following April, we read in his journal: "Being at Mr. Fox's society, my heart was so full that I could not confine myself to the forms of prayer which we were accustomed to use there. Neither do I purpose to be confined to them any more, but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as may be suitable to particular occasions."

The next day, being the Sabbath, he speaks of his ministerial labors, and adds: "I see the promise; but it is afar off." April 22d, another interview occurred; and the journals of Wesley and of Böhler are mutually illustrative and suggestive. "I met Peter Böhler once more," writes Wesley. "I had now no objection to what he said of the nature of faith—namely, that it is (to use the words of our Church) 'a sure trust and confidence which a man hath, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God.' Neither could I deny either the happiness or holiness which he described as 'the fruits of living faith.' But I could not comprehend what he spoke of an instantaneous work. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment; how a man could at once be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles, but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than instantaneous conversions—scarce any so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but one retreat left, namely: 'Thus, I grant, God wrought in the first ages of Christianity; but the

times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now?' But on Sunday, 23d, I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses, who testified God had so wrought in themselves, giving them, in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son as translated them out of darkness into light, and from sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, 'Lord, help thou my unbelief!'"

"I took," says Peter Böhler, "four of my English brethren to John Wesley, that they might relate their experience to him, how the Saviour so soon and so mightily has compassion, and accepts the sinner. They told, one after another, what had been wrought in them; Wolff, especially, in whom the change was quite recent, spoke very heartily, mightily, and in confidence of his faith. John Wesley and those that were with him were as if thunder-struck at these narrations. I asked him what he then believed. He said four examples were not enough to prove the thing. To satisfy his objections, I replied I would bring eight more here in London. After a short time he stood up and said: 'We will sing that hymn, *Hier legt mein Sinn sich vor dir nieder.*'" \*

My soul before thee prostrate lies,  
To thee, her source, my spirit flies;  
My wants I mourn, my chains I see;  
O let thy presence set me free!

Böhler continues: "During the singing of the Moravian version, he often wiped his eyes. Immediately after, he took me alone into his own room and declared 'that he was now satisfied of what I said of faith, and he would not question any more about it; that he was clearly convinced of the want of it; but how could he help himself, and how could he obtain such faith? He was a man that had not sinned so grossly as other people.' I replied that it was sin enough that he did not believe on the Saviour; he should not depart from the door of the Saviour until he helped him. He wept heartily and bitterly as I spoke to him on this matter, and insisted that I must pray with him."

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\*The original was composed by a pious physician, well read in theology, and connected with the Orphan-house at Halle at the time of Francke. He, along with his brother, prepared the drugs which were known as the "medicines of Halle," which being in great repute, tended not a little to defray the expenses of the institution. The above version is that of Wesley, 1739.—*Lockwood.*



Wesley had not attained the blessing for which he so earnestly sought: now he had clearer views. He began to declare that doctrine of faith which he has been taught. For in answer to his question whether he ought not to leave off preaching, Böhler replied: ("Preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it, you will preach it.") He was also much confirmed in the truth by hearing the experience of Mr. Hutchins, of Pembroke College, and Mrs. Fox—"two living witnesses," he says, "that God can at least, if he does not always, give that faith whereof cometh salvation, in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven."

Blendon, the spacious residence of the Delamotte family, was no stranger to Methodist visitors. John and Charles Wesley, and Broughton, if no others, were there April 25. Charles's journal says: "We sang, and fell into a dispute whether conversion was gradual or instantaneous. My brother was very positive for the latter, and very shocking; mentioned some late instances of gross sinners believing in a moment. I was much offended at his worse than unedifying discourse, and insisted a man need not know when first he had faith. His obstinacy in favoring the contrary opinion drove me at last out of the room. After dinner, I read the Life of Mr. Haliburton; one instance, but only one, of instantaneous conversion." Three days later, he is at his London lodgings, dangerously ill:

In the morning Dr. Cockburn came to see me; and a better physician—Peter Böhler—whom God had detained in England for my good. He stood by my bedside and prayed over me; that now, at least, I might see the Divine intention in this and my late illness. I immediately thought it might be that I should again consider Böhler's doctrine of faith; examine myself *whether I was in the faith*; and if I was not, never cease seeking and longing after it till I attained it.

Wesley returned to Oxford, Böhler walking with him a few miles; but he was hastily recalled by tidings of his brother's relapse, on whose spiritual condition he expresses himself thus:

May 1st. The return of my brother's illness obliged me again to hasten to London. In the evening I found him better, as to his health, than I expected; but strongly averse from what he called "the new faith."

But after the interval of a single day this entry is found:

May 3d. My brother had a long and particular conversation with Peter Böhler. And it now pleased God to open his eyes, so that he also saw clearly what was the nature of that one true, living faith, whereby alone "through grace we are saved."

Having fulfilled his brief mission in England, Böhler embarked for America, May 4, leaving the Wesleys hungering and thirsting for the righteousness of faith. In a short time Charles found peace with God, as he lay on the bed of sickness. As he was the first of the brothers who received the name of Methodist, so was he the first to learn by experience the saving truth which Methodism was destined to witness to the world.<sup>11</sup> During this interval he was visited by several persons, of whom some had obtained "the pearl of great price," and others were pressing hard after it; for a spirit of inquiry on the subject of religion was then extensively excited, partly by the recent preaching of Whitefield, partly by the private labors of Böhler, and partly by the preaching of John Wesley, who was admitted into several of the London pulpits, and was followed by immense crowds of people. A special interest attached to him as a returned missionary whose journal had been read, as well as a preacher of strong, if not strange, doctrines.

As an illustration of the manner in which Charles Wesley waited upon God for the gift of faith, and of the salvation connected with it, the following selections from his journal are given:

May 12th. I waked in the same blessed temper, hungry and thirsty after God. I began Isaiah, and seemed to see that to me were the promises made, and would be fulfilled; for that Christ loved me. I found myself more desirous, more assured, I should believe. This day (and indeed my whole time) I spent in discoursing on faith, either with those that had it, or those that sought it; in reading the Scriptures, and in prayer. At night my brother came, exceeding heavy. I forced him (as he had often forced me) to sing a hymn to Christ; and almost thought he would come while we were singing; assured he would come quickly.

May 14th. The beginning of the day I was heavy, weary, and unable to pray; but the desire soon returned, and I found much comfort both in prayer and in the word—my eyes being opened more and more to discover and lay hold upon the promises. I longed to find Christ, that I might show him to all mankind; that I might praise, that I might love him. Several persons called to-day, and were convinced of unbelief.

May 17th. To-day I first saw Luther on the Galatians. I marveled that we were so soon and so entirely removed from him that called us into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel. Who would believe our Church had been founded upon this important article of justification by faith alone? I am astonished I should ever think this a new doctrine, especially while our articles and homilies stand unrepealed, and the key of knowledge is not yet taken away.

May 21st, 1738. I waked in hope and expectation of His coming. At nine my brother and some friends came and sang a hymn to the Holy Ghost. My comfort and hope were hereby increased. In about half an hour they went. I betook

myself to prayer, the substance as follows: O Jesus, thou hast said, "I will come unto you;" thou hast said, "I will send the Comforter unto you;" thou hast said, "My Father and I will come unto you and make our abode with you." Thou art God, who canst not lie. I wholly rely upon thy most true promise. Accomplish it in thy time and manner.

While a pious mechanic who nursed him\* was reading the thirty-second Psalm—"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile"—he says: "The Spirit of God strove with my own, and the evil spirit, till by degrees he chased away the darkness of my unbelief. I found myself convinced, I knew not how nor when; and immediately fell to intercession. I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ. My temper for the rest of the day was mistrust of my own great but unknown weakness."

"To use his own expressive language," says Thomas Jackson, "he held the Saviour with a trembling hand; but by prayer, spiritual conversation, and the practical study of the inspired volume, his confidence waxed stronger, and his evidence of the Divine favor became increasingly distinct and vivid." †

When John Wesley left the sick-bed of his brother that morning, he went to one of the churches in London and assisted in the administration of the Lord's Supper. "On leaving the church," says he, "I received the surprising news that my brother had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength returned also from that hour. 'Who is so great a God as our God?'"

John Wesley was still a mourner. His heart was heavy. He was doubtless greatly encouraged by his brother's happy experience. On the day after he had found peace, Charles says: "My brother coming, we joined in intercession for him. In the evening we sang and prayed again." Two more days, and then, on May 24, at five in the morning, Wesley opened his Testament on these words: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nat-

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\*He says, in his journal: "God sent Mr. Bray to me, a poor, ignorant mechanic, who knows nothing but Christ; yet, by knowing him, knows and discerns all things." Bray was a happy believer in the Lord Jesus, and was able, from his own personal experience, as well as from the sacred volume, to teach even the accomplished collegian "the way of the Lord more perfectly" than he had hitherto known it. This was May 21st, Whitsunday. † Life of C. Wesley.



ure." On leaving home he opened on the text, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." In the afternoon he went to St. Paul's Cathedral. The anthem was:

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice.  
O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint.

If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it?

For there is mercy with thee; therefore shalt thou be feared.

O Israel, trust in the Lord for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.

In the evening he went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate-street, where a layman was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, describing saving faith. Possessed of it, the heart is "cheered, elevated, and transported with sweet affections toward God." Receiving the Holy Ghost through faith, the man "is renewed and made spiritual," and he is impelled to fulfill the law "by the vital energy in himself." Wesley says:

About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the "law of sin and death." I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitely used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, "This cannot be faith, for where is thy joy?" Then was I taught that peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation; but that as to the transports of joy that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth them, according to the counsel of his own will. After my return home I was much buffeted with temptations, but cried out and they fled away. They returned again and again: I as often lifted up my eyes, and he sent me help from his holy place. And herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving—yea, fighting—with all my might, under the law, as well as under grace. But *then* I was sometimes, if not often, conquered; *now* I was always conqueror.

"His experience," says Richard Watson, "nurtured by habitual prayer, and deepened by unwearied exertion in the cause of his Saviour, settled into that steadfast faith and solid peace which the grace of God perfected in him to the close of his long and active life."

Such was the way by which these men, who were to teach others, at length came "into the liberty of the sons of God." But

for the thorns and briers through which they passed; but for the wormwood and the gall they drank, during dreary years, they had not been so well fitted to awaken, to comfort, and to guide others. Being now possessed of the true key to all sound religious experience, and of a power in their ministry which they had never wielded before, the brothers immediately entered upon an energetic course of evangelical labor, calling sinners to repentance, and proclaiming to rich and poor, old and young, men and women of moral habits, and profligate transgressors, including convicts under sentence of death, pardon and peace as "the common salvation," to be obtained by all alike, through faith in the blood of Christ. Others caught the theme and carried on the work.\*

Before the end of the month Charles Wesley's health was so far improved that he was able to go abroad. In consequence of his affliction he was, as yet, unable to address congregations in public; but, like the apostles at Jerusalem, "daily, and in every house," where he could gain access, "he ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." In private companies, where many resorted to him, he read the Scriptures, sang hymns, related his religious experience, and urged upon all the duty and privilege of an immediate application to Christ, in faith for pardon and peace and holiness. The most perfect picture of his feelings and character at this period is that which was drawn years afterward by his own hand: "How happy are they, who their Saviour obey!"

( The doctrine of present salvation from sin, by faith in the Lord Jesus, was like fire in his bones. ) His heart burned with love to Christ, and with zeal for the advancement of his work and glory; his bowels yearned in pity for the souls of unregenerate men, while his faith set at defiance all opposition. Scarcely a day passed but one or more persons were convinced of the truth, and believed to the saving of their souls.

Eighteen days after his conversion (June 11th), John Wesley preached before the University at Oxford that famous sermon on "By grace are ye saved through faith"—henceforth his favorite theme, and the key-note of his ministry.† He describes this faith and its fruits, answers objections, and shows that to preach salvation by faith only is not to preach against holiness

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\* Watson's Life of Wesley. † No. I., in Standard Edition of his Sermons.

and good works. To the rich, the learned, the reputable before him, he makes faithful application:

When no more objections, then we are simply told that salvation by faith only ought not to be preached as the first doctrine, or at least not to be preached to all. But what saith the Holy Ghost? "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ." So, then, that "whosoever believeth on him shall be saved," is, and must be, the foundation of all our preaching; that is, must be preached first. "Well, but not to all." To whom, then, are we not to preach it? Whom shall we except? The poor? Nay; they have a peculiar right to have the gospel preached unto them. The unlearned? No. God hath revealed these things unto unlearned and ignorant men from the beginning. The young? By no means. "Suffer these," in anywise, to come unto Christ, "and forbid them not." The sinners? Least of all. "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Why then, if any, we are to except the rich, the learned, the reputable, the moral men. And it is true, they too often except themselves from hearing; yet we must speak the words of our Lord. For thus the tenor of our commission runs: "Go and preach the gospel to every creature." If any man wrest it, or any part of it, to his destruction, he must bear his own burden. But still, "as the Lord liveth, whatsoever the Lord saith unto us, that we will speak."

How could Wesley ever be called a papist, even by foolish enemies, when he preached doctrine so destructive of the Romish delusion?—"At this time more especially will we speak, that 'by grace are ye saved through faith,' because never was the maintaining this doctrine more seasonable than it is at this day. Nothing but this can effectually prevent the increase of the Romish delusion among us. It is endless to attack, one by one, all the errors of that Church. But salvation by faith strikes at the root, and all fall at once where this is established. It was this doctrine, which our Church justly calls *the strong rock and foundation of the Christian religion*, that first drove popery out of these kingdoms; and it is this alone can keep it out. Nothing but this can give a check to that immorality which hath 'overspread the land as a flood.' Can you empty the great deep drop by drop? Then you may reform us by dissuasives from particular vices. But let the 'righteousness which is of God by faith' be brought in, and so shall its proud waves be stayed."

Such was the great doctrine which Wesley began to preach in 1738. It was the preaching of this doctrine that gave birth to the revival of religion—"the religious movement of the eighteenth century"—called Methodism.



## CHAPTER X.

Christian Experience: Its Place in Methodism—The Almost Christian—Wesley's Conversion; His Testimony—The Witness of the Holy Spirit—The Witness of Our Own Spirit—Joint Testimony to Adoption.

IT is not the truth, but the personal apprehension and application of the truth, that saves. The concrete doctrine, as embodied and illustrated in experience, is of at least equal practical importance with the abstract doctrine, as stated in books. Methodism puts emphasis on experience. St. Paul more than once told how he was converted. The subjective aspects of Christianity, as presented in his epistles, are as striking as the objective. Experimental religion is not a cant phrase; it expresses a real and a great fact. It has been well said: Methodism reversed the usual policy of religious sects, which seek to sustain their spiritual life by their orthodoxy; it has sustained its orthodoxy by devoting its chief care to its spiritual life, and for more than a century had no serious outbreaks of heresy, notwithstanding the masses of untrained minds, gathered within its pale, and the general lack of preparatory education among its clergy. No other modern religious body affords a parallel to it in this respect.\*

The doctrine of conscious conversion, and of a direct witness of the Spirit testifying to the heart of the believer that he is a child of God, was the doctrine which exposed the founder of Methodism to the opposition of the formalists of the Church, and the ridicule of the philosophists of the world.<sup>1</sup> His personal experience connects itself with this doctrine. He has made the full disclosure; and according to an eminent authority "it is the only true key to his theological system and to his public ministry."<sup>†</sup> It would be difficult, he thinks, to fix upon a more interesting and instructive moral spectacle than that which is presented by the progress of his mind, through all its deep and serious agitations, doubts, difficulties, hopes, and fears, from his earliest religious awakenings to the moment when he found that steadfast peace which never afterward forsook him, but gave serenity

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\* Stevens's History of Methodism. † Watson's Life of Wesley.

to his countenance, and cheerfulness to his heart, to the last moment of a prolonged life. This critical passage of Wesleyan biography is thus defended by Watson against the solutions or cavils of men whose treatment of the subject is as unjust to Christianity as to Methodism:

“If the appointed method of man’s salvation, laid down in the gospel, be gratuitous pardon through faith in the merits of Christ’s sacrifice, and if a method of seeking justification by the works of moral obedience to the Divine law be plainly placed by St. Paul in opposition to this, and declared to be vain and fruitless; then, if in this way the Wesleys sought their justification before God, we see how true their own statement must of necessity have been—that, with all their efforts, they could obtain no solid peace of mind, no deliverance from the enslaving fear of death and final punishment, because they sought that by imperfect works which God has appointed to be attained by faith alone. Theirs was not, indeed, a state of heartless formality and self-deluding Pharisaism, aiming only at external obedience. It was just the reverse of this; they were awakened to a sense of danger, and they aimed at—nay, struggled with intense efforts after—universal holiness, inward and outward. But it was not a state of salvation; and if we find a middle state like this described in the Scriptures—a state in transit from dead formality to living faith and moral deliverance—the question, with respect to the truth of their representations as to their former state of experience, is settled.

“Such a middle state we see plainly depicted by the Apostle Paul, in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. There the mind of the person described ‘consents to the law that it is good,’ but finds in it only greater discoveries of his sinfulness and danger; there the effort, too, is after universal holiness—‘to will is present,’ but the power is wanting; every struggle binds the chain tighter; sighs and groans are extorted, till self-despair succeeds, and the true Deliverer is seen and trusted in: ‘O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord.’ The deliverance also, in the case described by St. Paul, is marked with the same characters as those exhibited in the conversion of the Wesleys: ‘There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made

me free from the law of sin and death.' 'Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Every thing in the account of the change wrought in the two brothers, and several of their friends about the same time, answers, therefore, to the New Testament. Nor was their experience, or the doctrine upon which it was founded, new, although in that age of declining piety unhappily not common.")

Southey, against whose callous and flippant criticism Watson more especially wrote, thought Wesley's feelings might have been accounted for by referring to "the state of his pulse or stomach." But it does not appear that his health was at all disordered. Fanaticism and enthusiasm are terms in plentiful use. Coleridge, in a marginal note, explains the phenomenon of Wesley's conversion as "a throb of sensibility accompanying a vehement *volition* of acquiescence." The world has not ceased to wonder why Southey—the *ci-devant* Socinian—should write the life of John Wesley. Total want of sympathy for the best parts of his subject "rendered him as incapable of laying down the geography of the moon as of giving the moral portraiture of Wesley." His incompetency for such a task was aptly expressed by one of Wesley's early biographers: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep."\*

That so devout and self-denying a man should be a stranger to the full salvation—only an "almost Christian"—offends the formalist. On May 24, 1738, John Wesley "received such a sense of the forgiveness of sins as till then he never knew." This was his steadfast testimony. The place and the hour—"about a quarter before nine"—he circumstantially and minutely recollects. His testimony is: "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*." This must be accepted as the time of his conversion—meaning, by this term, his obtaining the conscious forgiveness of his sins, and the witness of the Holy Ghost to his adoption as a child of God.

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\*Southey purposed making the *amende honorable* in a third edition, for his misconception, and accordingly his misrepresentation, of Wesley, that "the love of power was the ruling passion of his mind;" but this modification of the work was suppressed by his son, a bigoted Churchman, on whom the responsibility of its publication was devolved. See "Smith's History of Wesleyan Methodism," page 635.



In the primary sense of conversion—a turning from sin to God, with some measure of faith—the “good work” seems to have been begun in him before. Referring to the past, he testifies: “During this whole struggle between nature and grace, which had now continued above ten years, I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble; I had many sensible comforts, which are indeed no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still under the law, not under grace—the state most who are called Christians are content to live and die in. For I was only striving with, not freed from, sin; neither had I ‘the witness of the Spirit with my spirit.’”

He had long been a subject of gracious influence; and while writing bitter things against himself and condemning his spiritual state, he had much to be thankful for. Consequently in his later ministry, and in the final revision of his journal, we find certain expressions of a former date guarded and qualified by his own hand.\* Returning from Georgia, he wrote:

It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity; but what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I the least of all suspected), that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. (I am not sure of this.)

The concluding parenthesis was added afterward by himself.

Recounting, in the same meditation, what he had done and suffered in the cause of Christ, he said:

Does all this give me a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a Christian? By no means. If the oracles of God are true, if we are still to abide by “the law and the testimony;” all these things, though, when ennobled by faith in Christ,<sup>1</sup> they are holy and just and good, yet without it are “dung and dross.”

This foot-note was subsequently inserted to the last sentence: “<sup>†</sup> I had even then the faith of a *servant*, though not that of a *son*.”

In this searching meditation he expressed a severe opinion:

This, then, have I learned in the ends of the earth—that I “am fallen short of the glory of God;” that my whole heart is “altogether corrupt and abominable;” and, consequently, my whole life (seeing it cannot be that an “evil tree” should “bring forth good fruit”); that “alienated” as I am from “the life of God,” I am “a child of wrath,” an heir of hell.<sup>‡</sup>

The final foot-note is short but expressive: “<sup>†</sup> I believe not.”

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\* Wesley's Journal: In two volumes. From the latest London edition; with last corrections of the author. New York edition: 1837.

His journal before quoted has described an interview of memorable consequence, which occurred in March of this year:

Saturday, 4. I found my brother at Oxford, recovering from his pleurisy; and with him Peter Böhler; by whom (in the hand of the great God) I was, on Sunday, the 5th, clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of faith whereby alone we are saved. (With the full Christian salvation.)

The concluding parenthesis was added afterward by himself.\*

These last touches to his journal are noteworthy. Without withdrawing Wesley's good confession, they give his maturest views and self-interpretation, in tenderness and charity to those in whom is a spark of grace, or faith as a grain of mustard-seed. He would not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax. Against Molther, who held that no man has any degree of saving faith before he has the full assurance, the abiding witness of the Spirit, Wesley maintained the thesis that "There are degrees in faith, and that a man may have some degree of it before all things in him are become new; before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit." None called more loudly and constantly than he, "Let us go on to perfection;" yet none was more tender and careful of the "weak in faith." Five months after his conversion, being asked by his brother Samuel what he meant by being made a Christian, John replied: "By a Christian, I mean one who so believes in Christ as that sin hath no more dominion over him; and in this obvious sense of the word, I was not a Christian till the 24th of May last past. Till then sin had dominion over me, although I fought with it continually; but from that time to this it hath not. Such is the free grace of God in Christ. If you ask me by what means I am made free, I answer, by faith in Christ; by such a sort or degree of faith as I had not till that day."†

Three years later, preaching before the university on "The Almost Christian," ‡ he allows to such a character sincerity and many other excellent qualities—"a real desire to serve God, a

\* At this period [about the time of their conversion] both the brothers undervalued the grace which they had previously received, and which led them to do and suffer many things for the glory of God, and the benefit of mankind. It is nevertheless undeniable that until they received and exemplified the doctrine of present salvation from the guilt and power of sin by faith in Christ, they had neither of them attained to the true Christian character, as it is described in the apostolical epistles.—*Jackson's Life of C. Wesley*, page 223.

† Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley, M.A. ‡ Sermon No. II.

hearty desire to do his will. It is necessarily implied that a man have a sincere view of pleasing God in all things; in all his conversation; in all his actions; in all he does, or leaves undone. This design, if any man be *almost a Christian*, runs through the whole tenor of his life. This is the moving principle, both in his doing good, his abstaining from evil, and his using the ordinances of God." But this is not enough. If any should inquire: "Is it possible that any man living should go so far as this, and, nevertheless, be *only almost a Christian*? What more than this can be implied in the being a *Christian altogether*?"—the preacher boldly meets the question, speaking where his life and conversation had been well known:

"I answer, first, that it is possible to go thus far, and yet be but *almost a Christian*, I learn, not only from the oracles of God, but also from the sure testimony of experience. Brethren, great is 'my boldness toward you in this behalf.' And 'forgive me this wrong,' if I declare my own folly upon the housetop, for yours and the gospel's sake. Suffer me, then, to speak freely of myself, even as of another man. I am content to be abased, so ye may be exalted, and to be yet more vile for the glory of my Lord. I did go thus far for many years, as many of this place can testify; using diligence to eschew all evil, and to have a conscience void of offense; redeeming the time; buying up every opportunity of doing all good to all men; constantly and carefully using all the private means of grace; endeavoring after a steady seriousness of behavior, at all times and in all places; and God is my record, before whom I stand, doing all this in sincerity; having a real design to serve God; a hearty desire to do his will in all things; to please him who had called me to 'fight the good fight,' and to 'lay hold on eternal life.' Yet my own conscience beareth me witness in the Holy Ghost that all this time I was but *almost a Christian*."

After commending to his hearers that "right and true Christian faith"—"a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that, by the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God; whereof doth follow a loving heart, to obey his commandments"—the university sermon concludes: "May we all thus experience what it is to be, not almost only, but altogether Christians; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus; knowing we have peace with God through Jesus Christ; rejoicing in hope of the



glory of God; and having the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto us!"

That the meaning of a foot-note before quoted may be understood—"I had even then the faith of a *servant*, though not of a *son*"—we give an extract from one of Wesley's sermons:\*

But what is faith which is properly saving, which brings eternal salvation to all those that keep it to the end? It is such a divine conviction of God, and the things of God, as, even in its infant state, enables every one that possess it to "fear God and work righteousness." And whosoever, in every nation, believes thus far, the apostle declares, "is accepted of him." He actually is at the very moment in a state of acceptance. But he is at present only a *servant* of God, not properly a *son*. Meantime, let it be well observed that the "wrath of God" no longer "abideth on him."

Indeed, nearly fifty years ago, when the preachers commonly called Methodists began to preach the grand scriptural doctrine, salvation by faith, they were not sufficiently apprised of the difference between a servant and a child of God. They did not clearly understand that even one "who feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." In consequence of this, they were apt to make sad the hearts of those whom God had not made sad. For they frequently asked those who feared God, "Do you know that your sins are forgiven?" And upon their answering "No," immediately replied, "Then you are a child of the devil." No; that does not follow. It might have been said (and it is all that can be said with propriety): "Hitherto you are only a *servant*, you are not a *child*, of God. You have already great reason to praise God that he has called you to his honorable service. Fear not. Continue crying unto him, "And you shall see greater things than these."

And, indeed, unless the servants of God halt by the way, they will receive the adoption of sons. They will receive the *faith* of the children of God, by his *revealing* his only-begotten Son in their hearts. Thus, the faith of a child is, properly and directly, a divine conviction, whereby every child of God is enabled to testify, "The life that I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." And whosoever has this, the Spirit of God witnesseth with his spirit that he is a child of God. So the apostle writes to the Galatians: "Ye are the sons of God by faith. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father;" that is, giving you child-like confidence in him, together with a kind affection toward him. This, then, it is that properly constitutes the difference between a servant of God and a child of God. "He that believeth," as a child of God, "hath the witness in himself." This the servant hath not. Yet let no man discourage him; rather, lovingly exhort him to expect it every moment.

From the hour of his adoption as a son, Wesley was another man, and his preaching another preaching. That was the genesis of Methodism. Before, he worked *for* salvation; now, *from* salvation. Before, his word was unfruitful, and his few converts

\*Sermon CV.: Text, Heb. xi. 6.

fell away without his presence and support; now, his word is spirit and life, and the fruit abides. Before, he sought to save himself; now, to save others. Before, he coveted solitude, and declined the responsibility of two thousand souls at Epworth; now, the world is not too wide for him, nor the care of all the churches too heavy. (When the sun passes meridian, there is no noise; but, from that supreme moment, all the shadows fall the other way. Every tree and tower and spire of grass casts its shadow in the opposite direction.)

(Distinguishable from justification, but closely connected with it, is the doctrine of the direct witness of the Spirit. To this, Methodism has borne an emphatic testimony.) It is not a Wesleyan dogma in the sense of having been discovered by Wesley, or of being exclusively held by Wesleyans; but they magnified it; they claimed it as the privilege of all believers, and they urged all to seek the full salvation. The doctrine of the Trinity is called Athanasian; but Athanasius only formulated what others accepted and what he intensely believed. In all the controversies which arose respecting the religious tenets of the early Methodists, it was invariably maintained that theirs was "the old religion;" "the religion of the primitive Church." "With respect to the doctrines which refer to the Divine Being, the great catholic faith of the trinity in unity, and also the fall of man, original sin, the eternal duration of rewards and punishments, and other topics, the Methodists hold opinions in common with all orthodox Churches." Those doctrines which were made the subject of frequent conversation in the early Conferences and of discourse in their sermons, and about which opposition and controversy arose, pertained mainly to experimental religion, and might be characterized not as new, but as neglected or lost sight of.

"None were more offended at the Wesleys than their eldest brother." That High-churchman was scandalized at a clergyman preaching to "tatterdemalions on a common," and "never once reading the liturgy." In his anger he went so far as to wish that those "canting fellows," as he called the Moravians, "who talked of *indwellings*, *experiences*, and *getting into Christ*," had never obtained any followers. Late in the year 1738 Samuel Wesley wrote to his mother, complaining of the course of his two brothers, and especially denouncing their doctrine of assur-

ance. Her letter in reply so far gratified him and favored his view as to take this ground: "If, upon a serious review of our state, we find that in the tenor of our lives we have or do now sincerely desire and endeavor to perform the conditions of the gospel-covenant required on our parts, then we may discern that the Holy Spirit hath laid in our minds a good foundation of a strong, reasonable, and lively hope of God's mercy through Christ. This is the assurance we ought to aim at, which the apostle calls 'the full assurance of hope.'" Dr. A. Clarke remarks upon this, as proof that her knowledge was "by no means clear and distinct" on the point. In the same letter she says:

You have heard, I suppose, that Mr. Whitefield is taking a progress through these parts to make a collection for a house in Georgia for orphans and such of the natives' children as they will part with to learn our language and religion. He came hither to see me, and we talked about your brothers. I told him I did not like their way of living, wished them in some place of their own, wherein they might regularly preach, etc. He replied: "I could not conceive the good they did in London; that the greatest part of our clergy were asleep, and that there never was a greater need of itinerant preachers than now." I then asked Mr. Whitefield if my sons were not for making some innovations in the Church, which I much feared. He assured me they were so far from it that they endeavored all they could to reconcile Dissenters to our communion.

As soon as she conversed with her sons, and heard them speak for themselves, Mrs. Wesley was convinced that their doctrine was both rational and scriptural; and she waited on their ministry with delight and profit to the end of her life.\*

Six months after his conversion, John Wesley and his brother Charles waited upon Dr. Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, to answer the complaints he had heard against them, to the effect that they preached an absolute assurance of salvation. The two being introduced, Gibson said: "If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God, and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation, and acceptable to God, I don't see how any good Christian can be without such assurance." The Wesleys meant more by "assurance" than this; but the doctrine, so far as it went, was one which they preached. The next point was the charge that they were Antinomians, be-

\*Samuel's last letter to his mother has this lament and protest: "It was with exceeding concern and grief I heard you had countenanced a spreading delusion so far as to be one of Jack's congregation. Is it not enough that I am bereft of both my brothers, but must my mother follow too?"



cause they preached justification by faith only. To this they replied: "Can any one preach otherwise who agrees with our Church and the Scriptures?"

"The first few years of Methodism were prolific of anti-Methodist literature." The clergy began to bestir themselves, and the war of pamphlets, expostulatory letters, and books, preceded that of clubs and stones, which followed. Vicars, deans, curates, rectors, chaplains, and bishops issued forth with sermons and pastorals and tractates, abusing the Methodists, and warning the people against them, as "restless deceivers," "babbler," "novices in divinity," "teachers of absurd doctrines," "modern enthusiasts," "solifidians," "papists in disguise;" and things not only false, but monstrously false, are asserted of them. One of the most temperate productions was from a doctor of divinity, a royal chaplain, and preacher to the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn, who published "A Caution against Religious Delusion," in the shape of "a sermon on the New Birth; occasioned by the pretensions of the Methodists." They are charged with "vain and confident boastings," with "gathering tumultuous assemblies to the disturbance of the public peace, and with setting at naught all authority and rule," with "intruding into other men's labors, and encouraging abstinence, prayer, and other religious exercises, to the neglect of the duties of our station." Before the end of the year this sermon reached a sixth edition. Another sermon, on "The Doctrine of Assurance," by the chaplain to his royal highness, Frederick, Prince of Wales (with an appendix), was published (8vo, 39 pages), and had an extensive circulation. The preacher argues that assurance "is given to very few, and perhaps only to such whom God calls either to extraordinary services or to extraordinary sufferings." He further argues that to profess to have received such an assurance savors of spiritual pride, and cannot but produce bad results. The Bishop of London published his "Pastoral Letter to the People of his Diocese; by way of Caution against Lukewarmness on one hand, and Enthusiasm on the other" (55 pages). Two-thirds of this pamphlet are leveled against the Methodists.\* Thirteen days after the "Pastoral Letter" was published, Whitefield wrote an answer to it, and in a firm but respectful way replied to all the bishop's allegations. He concludes by charging Gibson with

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\* The Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley, M.A.

propagating a new gospel, because he asserts that "good works are a *necessary condition* of our being justified in the sight of God." He maintains that *faith* is the only necessary condition, and that *good works* are the necessary fruit and consequence. "This," he writes, "is the doctrine of Jesus Christ; this is the doctrine of the Church of England; and it is because the generality of the clergy of the Church of England do not preach this doctrine that I am resolved, God being my helper, to continue instant in season and out of season, to declare it unto all men, let the consequences as to me privately be what they will."

Without losing time or temper in answering their accusers, the Methodist preachers kept on their way, urging upon small and great not only salvation by faith, but the witness of the Spirit. Susanna Wesley had long been a Christian woman; but this doctrine was one of which she had scarcely ever heard. At the age of seventy, and only three years before her death, she obtained the blessing for herself, and obtained it under the ministry of her son-in-law. Wesley writes:

September 3, 1739. I talked largely with my mother, who told me that, till a short time since, she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned as the having God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit; much less did she imagine that this was the common privilege of all true believers; "therefore," said she, "I never durst ask it for myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing those words, in delivering the cup to me, 'The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee,' the words struck into my heart, and I knew God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins." I asked whether her father (Dr. Annesley) had not the same faith, and whether she had not heard him preach it to others. She answered: "He had it himself, and declared a little before his death that for more than forty years he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all, of his being accepted in the Beloved; but that, nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach—no, not once—explicitly upon it; whence she supposed he also looked upon it as the peculiar blessing of a few, not as promised to all the people of God."\*

As taught by the founder of Methodism, the witness of the

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\* In confirmation is the following from a sermon published by Dr. Annesley, in 1661: "There are believers of several growths in the Church of God: fathers, young men, children, and babes; and as in most families there are more babes and children than grown men, so in the Church of God there are more weak, doubting Christians than strong ones, grown up to a full assurance. A babe may be born and yet not know it; so a man may be born again and not be sure of it. Sometimes they think they have grounds of hope that they shall be saved; sometimes they think they have grounds of fear that they shall be condemned. Not knowing which might be most weighty, like a pair of balances, they are in equipoise."

Spirit was not the assurance of *eternal* salvation, as held by Calvinistic divines, but the assurance given by the Holy Spirit to penitent and believing persons that they are "*now accepted of God, pardoned, and adopted into God's family.*" It was a doctrine, therefore, which invited to no relaxation of religious effort, and no irregularity of life; for, as the person who is now justified was once condemned, so, by falling into sin and unbelief, he may in future come again into condemnation. And further, as this justification, with its evidence, may be forfeited, so it may be recovered; "our backslidings" may be "healed," and the favor of God be again restored. Few divines, says Richard Watson, have ever denied the possibility of our becoming assured of the favor of God in a sufficient degree to give substantial comfort to the mind; since the more sincere and earnest a person is in the affair of his salvation, the more miserable he must be if there be no possibility of his being assured that the wrath of God no longer abideth upon him. "Their differences have rather respected the *means* by which the contrite become assured of that change in their relation to Almighty God, whom they have offended, which in Scripture is expressed by the term justification." The question has been, By what means is the assurance of Divine favor conveyed to the mind? Some have concluded that we obtain it by inference only; others, by the direct testimony of the Holy Spirit to the mind. Wesley held that both direct and indirect testimony were the privilege of believers. His most used and favorite text is: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16);\* on which he remarks:

None who believe the Scriptures to be the word of God can doubt the importance of such a truth—a truth revealed therein not once only, not obscurely, not incidentally, but frequently, and that in express terms; but solemnly, and of set purpose, as denoting one of the peculiar privileges of the children of God. It more nearly concerns the Methodists, so called, clearly to understand, explain, and defend this doctrine, because it is one grand part of the testimony which God has given them to bear to all mankind. It is by his peculiar blessing upon them in searching the Scriptures, confirmed by the experience of his children, that this great evangelical truth has been recovered, which had been for many years well-nigh lost and forgotten.

Proceeding to expound "this joint testimony"† to the great fact that "we are the children of God," he shows what is this

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\* Sermons X., XI., XII. † Note the Greek verb *συμμαρτυρεῖ*.



witness or testimony of our spirit, and what is the testimony of God's Spirit. The foundation of the former is laid in those numerous texts of Scripture which describe the marks of the children of God. One may reason thus: First, the Scriptures say, by St. Paul, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God," into all holy tempers and actions, "they are the sons of God." Secondly, I am thus "led by the Spirit of God." Thirdly, he easily concludes, "therefore I am a son of God." Again, by St. John: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." One examining himself says: I love Christians because they are Christians; I love the brethren; therefore, I "have passed from death unto life." Or, again, in this way: He that now loves God, that delights and rejoices in him with a humble joy, a holy peace, and an obedient love, is a child of God. But I thus love, delight, and rejoice in God; therefore, I am a child of God. The disciple is often and usefully thus employed, searching and trying his ways and thoughts, and comparing his experience with the Bible standard. "Yet all this," says Wesley, "is no other than rational evidence, the witness of our spirit, our reason, or understanding. It all resolves into this: Those having these marks are children of God; but we have these marks; therefore, we are children of God."

Love, peace, gentleness, and other "fruit of the Spirit," may be found in the heart and life; also hatred of sin and jealousy for God's honor, and strong desire for conformity to God's will. These are wrought by the self-same Holy Spirit in every one that hath them, but they are not to be confounded with His direct witness. A peculiarity of this "testimony of our spirit" is, that though yielding a degree of comfort and hope, it never rises to certainty. It is cumulative, but no accumulation of it amounts to full assurance. Probability is its result and doubt its companion. The humble-minded disciple is aware that the heart is deceitful and wicked, and may easily magnify what counts for, and extenuate what weighs against, its hope. Many discoveries are made in the hidden recesses of the soul, as well as in the outward life, that raise the painful question, Can all this consist with a gracious state? Am I indeed a child of God?

"Now," continues Wesley, "this is properly the testimony of our own spirit." And he proceeds to give his most important definition: "But what is that testimony of God's Spirit which is

superadded to and conjoined with this? How does He 'bear witness with our spirit, that we are children of God?' It is hard to find words in the language of men to explain 'the deep things of God.' Indeed, there are none that will adequately express what the children of God experience. But perhaps one might say (desiring any who are taught of God to correct, to soften, or strengthen the expression): The testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God."

Twenty years afterward, preaching on the same subject, he repeated this form of sound words: "After twenty years' further consideration, I see no cause to retract any part of this. Neither do I conceive how any of these expressions may be altered, so as to make them more intelligible. Meantime," he adds, "let it be observed, I do not mean hereby that the Spirit of God testifies this by any outward voice; no, nor always by an inward voice. But He so works upon the soul by his immediate influence, and by a strong though inexplicable operation, that the stormy wind and troubled waves subside, and there is a sweet calm; the heart resting as in the arms of Jesus, and the sinner being clearly satisfied that God is reconciled."

Of this "meridian evidence," Wesley further speaks: "The manner how the *divine* testimony is manifested to the heart I do not take upon me to explain. Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it. The wind bloweth, and I hear the sound thereof; but I cannot tell how it cometh, or whither it goeth. As no one knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is in him, so the *manner* of the things of God knoweth no one, save the Spirit of God. But the fact we know, namely, that the Spirit of God does give a believer such a testimony of his adoption that while it is present to the soul he can no more doubt the reality of his sonship than he can doubt of the shining of the sun while he stands in the full blaze of his beams."

Wesley points out the error of those who, while admitting in words the testimony of the Holy Spirit, mean only the inferential evidence derived from the fruit of the Spirit; who, though speaking of joint witnesses, yet "swallow up" the testimony of both in one:

But the point in question is, whether there be any *direct* testimony of the Spirit at all; whether there be any other testimony of the Spirit than that which arises from a consciousness of the fruit.

I believe there is; because that is the plain, natural meaning of the text: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." It is manifest, here are two witnesses mentioned, who together testify the same thing; the Spirit of God, and our own spirit. The late Bishop of London, in his sermon on this text, seems astonished that any one can doubt of this, which appears upon the very face of the words. Now, "the testimony of our own spirit," says the bishop, "is one, which is the consciousness of our own sincerity;" or, to express the same thing a little more clearly, the consciousness of the fruit of the Spirit. When our spirit is conscious of this—of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness—it easily infers from these premises that we are the children of God. It is true that the great man supposes the other witness to be "the consciousness of our own good works." This, he affirms, is the testimony of God's Spirit. But this is included in the testimony of our own spirit.

A few extracts from the writings of the older divines may help to set forth the distinction and the doctrine:

It is the office of the Holy Ghost to assure us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God toward us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." And "because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." As, therefore, we are born again by the Spirit, and receive from him our regeneration, so we are also assured by the same Spirit of our adoption.—*Pearson on the Creed.*

The Spirit which God hath given us to assure us that we are the sons of God, to enable us to call upon him as our Father.—*Hooker on Certainty of Faith.*

From Dr. Owen "On the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 16): "'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God;' the witness which our own spirits do give unto our adoption is *the work and effect* of the Holy Spirit in us; if it were not, it would be false, and not confirmed by the testimony of the Spirit himself, who is the Spirit of truth. 'And none knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God.' (1 Cor. ii. 11.) If he declare not our sonship in us and to us, we cannot know it. How doth he then bear witness to our spirits? What is the distinct testimony? It must be some such act of his as evidenceth itself to be from him, *immediately*, unto them that are concerned in it—that is, those unto whom it is given."



From Poole, "On Romans" (viii. 16): "The Spirit of adoption doth not only excite us to call upon God as our Father, but it doth ascertain and assure us, as before, that we are his children. And this it doth not by an outward voice, as God the Father to Jesus Christ; nor by an angel, as to Daniel and the Virgin Mary; but by an inward and secret suggestion, whereby he raiseth our hearts to this persuasion, that God is our Father, and we are his children. This is not the testimony of the graces and operations of the Spirit, but of the Spirit itself."

Having stated a vital truth, more at large and more clearly than others have done, Wesley turns attention to objections, and shows how this joint testimony of God's Spirit and our own may be distinguished from presumption and delusion. That fanatics can abuse it is not sufficient reason for "denying the gift of God, and giving up the great privilege of his children." Justification by faith, as taught by St. Paul, was objected to in his day as leading to licentiousness. Divine truth must not be surrendered or retired because human weakness or wickedness can pervert it.

The direct witness is never referred to in the book of God as standing alone, but as connected with the other; as giving a *joint testimony*—testifying *with our spirit* that we are children of God. The "tree is known by its fruit;" hereby we *prove* if it be "of God." No man's word can be taken for this inward witness whose outward life does not answer to the profession:

By the present marks may we easily distinguish a child of God from a presumptuous self-deceiver. The Scriptures describe that joy in the Lord which accompanies the witness of his Spirit as a humble joy—a joy that abases to the dust, that makes a pardoned sinner cry out: "I am vile! What am I, or my father's house? Now mine eye seeth thee, I abhor myself in dust and ashes!" And wherever lowliness is, there is meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering. There is a soft, yielding spirit—a mildness and sweetness, a tenderness of soul, which words cannot express. But do these fruits attend that *supposed* testimony of the Spirit in a presumptuous man? Just the reverse. The more confident he is of the favor of God, the more is he lifted up; the more does he exalt himself; the more haughty and assuming is his whole behavior. The stronger witness he imagines himself to have, the more overbearing is he to all around him; the more incapable of receiving any reproof; the more impatient of contradiction. Instead of being more meek and gentle and teachable, more "swift to hear and slow to speak," he is more slow to hear and swift to speak.

"French prophets," in Wesley's day, brought this doctrine of Divine assurance into discredit with some who did not consider its limitations. Later, "Millerite prophets" in America claimed

this sanction for their calculations and predictions that the world would come to an end on a certain day—now past. Such pretensions were unwarranted. This assurance is a joint testimony, and it is promised on only one subject, and that the most important in the world to every man—"Am I a child of God?"

Reference is made to the test of experimental religion—"the experience of the children of God; the experience not of two or three, not of a few, but of a great multitude, which no man can number. It has been confirmed, both in this and in all ages, by 'a cloud' of living and dying 'witnesses.' It is confirmed by *your* experience and *mine*," says Wesley. "The Spirit itself bore witness to my spirit, that I was a child of God, gave me an evidence hereof; and I immediately cried, 'Abba, Father!' And this I did (and so did you) before I reflected on, or was conscious of, any fruit of the Spirit."

The application of this strong and comfortable doctrine, in such hands as John Wesley's, may be foreseen:

To secure us from all delusion, God gives us two witnesses that we are his children. And this they testify conjointly. Therefore, "what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Beware, then, thou who art called by the name of Christ, that thou come not short of the mark of thy high calling. Beware thou rest not, either in a natural state, with too many that are accounted *good Christians*; or in a legal state, wherein those who are highly esteemed of men are generally content to live and die. Nay, but God hath prepared better things for thee, if thou follow on till thou attain. Thou art not called to fear and tremble, like devils; but to rejoice and love, like the angels of God. Well, then, mayest thou say, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" Thanks be unto God, who giveth me to "know in whom I have believed;" who hath "sent forth the Spirit of his Son into my heart, crying, Abba, Father," and even now, "bearing witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God!" And see that not only thy lips, but thy life, show forth his praise.

To the material truth as set forth by Wesley—the direct testimony of the Spirit for every believer—all Methodists agree. As to an incidental or secondary point, whether or not this testimony always precedes the testimony of our own spirit in the new birth, there is not equal uniformity of opinion. Some experiences which Wesley himself has published, with implied if not express approval, can hardly be reconciled with the theory of the invariable precedence of the Spirit's testimony. The persons in question were doubtless real Christians—walking in the best light and comfort they had for months, it may be years, before receiv-

ing the "meridian evidence." In the case of "sudden conversions," undoubtedly the first notice is from above, before the soul has opportunity to perceive or reflect upon any fruit of the Spirit, in regeneration, as manifested in the realm of consciousness.

There is such a witness, and all may have it. After this fashion Wesley presses home the truth, in conclusion:

Let none rest in any supposed fruit of the Spirit without the witness. There may be foretastes of joy, of peace, of love, and those not delusive, but really from God, long before we have the witness in ourselves—before the Spirit of God witnesses with our spirits that we have "redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins." Yea, there may be a degree of long-suffering, of gentleness, of fidelity, meekness, temperance (not a shadow thereof, but a real degree, by the preventing grace of God), before we "are accepted in the Beloved," and consequently, before we have a testimony of our acceptance; but it is by no means advisable to rest here; it is at the peril of our souls if we do. If we are wise, we shall be continually crying to God, until his Spirit cry in our heart, "Abba, Father!" (This is the privilege of all the children of God; and without this we can never be assured that we are his children.) Without this we cannot retain a steady peace, nor avoid perplexing doubts and fears. But when we have once received this Spirit of adoption, this "peace which passeth all understanding," and which expels all painful doubt and fear, will "keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." And when this has brought forth its genuine fruit, all inward and outward holiness, it is undoubtedly the will of him that calleth us to give us always what he has once given; so that there is no need that we should ever more be deprived of either the testimony of God's Spirit or the testimony of our own, the consciousness of our walking in all righteousness and true holiness.

The great fact and force in the Methodist revival was the experience and the preaching of this witness of the Spirit.) Justification by faith had been stated in the homilies and articles of the Church of England with the precision and frequency that might be expected concerning the dogma on which the Reformation rested. Though lost sight of, and even opposed, it was there; and the first Methodists appealed to those standards. Not so with the doctrine of the Spirit's testimony. It was obscurely and inferentially supported from that quarter, while for obvious reasons Calvinistic dissent dealt with it feebly and infrequently. For if "once in grace always in grace" be true, then *present* assurance becomes the assurance of *eternal* salvation; and consequences follow which practical morality hesitates to accept. It was for the Methodists, standing on the evangelical, Arminian platform, to proclaim the fact that the plan of redemption in its completeness made provision not only for the forgiveness of sin, but that men might *know* that their sins were forgiven.



The effect upon the preachers was inspiring. Embassadors of God must be confident of their commission and of their message. They are empowered to comfort his people, and in such a message there is comfort. The personal experience of evangelists must be clear: "We believe, and therefore speak." Otherwise their preaching may be entertaining, instructive, and, under great earnestness, even awakening; but the lament to the prophet of Israel is applicable to souls brought into salutary distress by such a ministry: "The children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth."

After the personal experience of this doctrine by Wesley and his co-laborers, their word was in power, sinners trembled, and great numbers were converted.) "From this time," is the declaration of a leading Wesleyan, "they began properly to preach the gospel." They had labored with all their energy and ability to establish the righteousness of the law, but neither knew nor preached the doctrines of the new covenant, and its comforts. Like all men destitute of personal and experimental faith and hope and joy in the Lord, they never thought of offering pardon and peace to the guilty through the alone merits of Jesus Christ; and nothing short of this is the gospel.

What they had felt and seen with confidence they told, and men listened to them as men in danger and trouble always will listen to those who show them the way of salvation. This witness of the Spirit was the key-note of their ministry, the burden of their songs, and the secret of their success. The weary and heavy-laden were offered *rest*—rest for their souls. Those who had been taught that chronic doubt was a sort of Christian virtue heard gladly of a more excellent way. Happy converts testified and shouted. The joy of the Lord was their strength. The voice of praise was in their tabernacles. The fervor of their devotions and the zeal of their evangelism—while defying the worldly and stirring up the lukewarm—drew to Methodism the most earnest elements, and gave it a place with the foremost in the Church militant.

## CHAPTER XI.

Wesley Visits Herrnhut—Experiences of the Brethren—Wesley Returns to England; Begins his Life-work—Whitefield—The Pentecostal Season—Shut out of the Churches—The Messengers Let Loose—Field-preaching Inaugurated.

**B**EFORE Wesley entered upon his life-work, having no preconceived plan or course of conduct but to seek good for himself and to do good to others, he visited the Moravian settlements in Germany. He had met Moravians on his voyage to Georgia. At Savannah, Spangenberg was his first acquaintance. On his return to London he found Böhler. Naturally he wished to know more of this people; and three weeks after his conversion, accompanied by his friend Ingham, he set out on his journey. Herrnhut, their chief settlement, most interested him and there he tarried longest. Talents and learning did not prevent him from feeling as “a babe” in Christ. Here he could converse with persons of matured Christian knowledge, who had made it their business and study to speak of divine things. Wesley availed himself of this privilege, and wrote down the substance of what he was told of the religious experience of several of the most distinguished of these disciples of Christ. He took note of their discipline, and attended their love-feasts, conferences, and Bible expositions to great profit; though not approving every thing he saw at this Jerusalem Church.

Christian David, the carpenter, by whose preaching and pioneering this colony had been founded, was happily at home, lately arrived from mission-work in Greenland. “Four times,” says Wesley in his journal, “I enjoyed the blessing of hearing him preach, during the few days I spent here; and every time he chose the very subject which I should have desired, had I spoken to him before. Thrice he described the state of those who are ‘weak in faith,’ who have received forgiveness through the blood of Christ, but have not received the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This state he explained once from ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;’ when he showed at large, from various scriptures, that many are children of God and heirs of the promises, long before they are

comforted by the abiding witness of the Spirit, melting their souls into all gentleness and 'meekness.'" In a private conversation Christian David said that "for many years he had had the forgiveness of sins, and a measure of the peace of God, before he had that witness of his Spirit which shuts out all doubt and fear." Another witness testified thus:

Martin Döber, when I described my state to him, said he had known very many believers who, if he asked the question, would not have dared to affirm that they were the children of God. And he added: "It is very common for persons to receive remission of sins, or justification through faith in the blood of Christ, before they receive the full assurance of faith, which God many times withholds till he has tried whether they will work together with him in the use of the first gift. Nor is there any need (continued Döber) to incite any one to seek that assurance by telling him the faith he has is nothing. This will be more likely to drive him to despair than to encourage him to press forward. His single business, who has received the first gift, is *credendo credere et in credendo perseverare* (to believe on, and to hold fast that whereunto he hath attained); to go on doing his Lord's will, according to the ability God hath already given, cheerfully and faithfully to use what he has received."

Wesley elicited the religious experience of Michael Linner, the oldest member of the Church, which was to the effect that Michael believed to the saving of his soul more than two years before he received the full assurance of faith; though he admitted that "the leading of the Spirit is different in different souls. His more usual method is, to give in one and the same moment the forgiveness of sins and a full assurance of that forgiveness. Yet in many he works as he did in me—giving first the remission of sins, and after some weeks, or months, or years, the full assurance of it." "This great truth was further confirmed to me," says Wesley the next day, "by the conversation I had with David Nitschman, one of the teachers or pastors of the Church." The narrative of others was more of a Wesleyan kind, and confirmative of the view that when sins are forgiven the Spirit at the same moment gives the assurance of it.

Wesley's characteristic fairness and his readiness to learn are seen in his giving at length experiences that differed circumstantially, though not substantially, from his own. Even now he began to comprehend a principle which a few years later he enunciated and ever followed: "I trust we shall all suffer God to carry on his own work in the way that pleaseth him." He was confirmed in the belief of that "meridian evidence that puts



doubt to flight." Sooner or later they all had it, and its effects in all were alike.

The fourth sermon of Christian David so impressed Wesley that he wrote it out, and we here present his draught, as it so well agrees with what he afterward uniformly taught:

The word of reconciliation which the apostles preached as the foundation of all they taught was, that "we are reconciled to God, not by our own works, nor by our own righteousness, but wholly and solely by the blood of Christ." But you will say, Must I not grieve and mourn for my sins? Must I not humble myself before God? Is not this just and right? And must I not first do this before I can expect God to be reconciled to me? I answer: It is just and right. You must be humbled before God. You must have a broken and contrite heart. But then observe, this is not your own work. Do you grieve that you are a sinner? This is the work of the Holy Ghost. Are you contrite? Are you humbled before God? Do you indeed mourn, and is your heart broken within you? All this worketh the self-same Spirit.

Observe again, this is not the foundation. It is not this by which you are justified. This is not the righteousness, this is no part of the righteousness, by which you are reconciled unto God. You grieve for your sins. You are deeply humble. Your heart is broken. Well; but all this is nothing to your justification.\* The remission of your sins is not owing to this cause, either in whole or in part. Your humiliation and contrition have no influence on that. Nay, observe further, that it may hinder your justification; that is, if you build any thing upon it; if you think "I must be *so or so* contrite. I must grieve *more* before I can be justified." Understand this well. To think you must be *more* contrite, *more* humble, *more* grieved, *more* sensible of the weight of sin, before you can be justified, is to lay your contrition, your grief, your humiliation, for the foundation of your being justified; at least, for a part of the foundation. Therefore, it hinders your justification; and a hinderance it is which must be removed before you can lay the right foundation. The right foundation is not *your* contrition (though that is not your *own*), not *your* righteousness, nothing of *your own*; nothing that is wrought *in you* by the Holy Ghost; but it is something *without you*, viz., the righteousness and the blood of Christ. For this is the word: "To him that believeth on God that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." See ye not that the foundation is nothing in us? There is no connection between God and the ungodly. There is no tie to unite them. They are altogether separate from each other. They have nothing in common. There is nothing less or more in the ungodly to join them to God. Works, righteousness, contrition? No. Ungodliness only. This, then, do—if you will lay a right foundation—go straight to Christ with all your ungodliness. Tell him: Thou whose eyes are as a flame of fire, searching my heart, seest that I am ungodly. I plead nothing else. I do not say I am humble, or contrite, but I am ungodly; therefore, bring me to Him that justifieth the ungodly. Let thy blood be the propitiation for me; for there is nothing in me but ungodliness.

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\* "This is not guarded. These things do not merit our justification, but they are absolutely necessary in order to it. God never pardons the impenitent.—*Wesley's Journal*."

Here is a mystery. Here the wise men of the world are lost, are taken in their own craftiness. This the learned of the world cannot comprehend. It is foolishness unto them. Sin is the only thing which divides men from God. Sin (let him that heareth understand) is the only thing which unites them to God; that is, the only thing which moves the Lamb of God to have compassion upon them, and by his blood to give them access to the Father. This is the word of reconciliation which we preach. This is the foundation which never can be moved. By faith we are built upon this foundation; and this faith also is the gift of God. It is his free gift, which he now and ever giveth to every one that is willing to receive it. And when they have received this gift of God, then their hearts will melt for sorrow that they have offended him. But this gift of God lives in the heart, not in the head. The faith of the head, learned from men or books, is nothing worth. It brings neither remission of sins nor peace with God. Labor, then, to believe with your whole heart; so shall you have redemption through the blood of Christ; so shall you be cleansed from all sin; so shall you go on from strength to strength, being renewed day by day in righteousness and all true holiness.

The Oxford scholar, the learned Fellow, sat at the feet of this plain but powerful man, who, when not engaged in preaching at home or planting missions abroad, worked at his bench—type of that generation of wise but unlearned preachers, unknown and yet well known, who were to be raised up by the Head of the Church, under Wesley's labors: John Nelson, the stone-mason; Samuel Bradburn, the shoe-maker; John Haime, the soldier; and Thomas Olivers, the cobbler—fit successors of the fishermen of Galilee; by whom the saving truth of the gospel was delivered upon the mind and conscience of the people as they did not hear it at St. Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey. "I would gladly," says Wesley, "have spent my life here; but my Master calling me to labor in another part of his vineyard, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place. O when shall this Christianity cover the earth as 'the waters cover the sea!'" He adds in another place: "I was exceedingly comforted and strengthened by the conversation of this lovely people, and returned to England more fully determined to spend my life in testifying the gospel of the grace of God." He arrived in London September 16, 1738, and immediately began to preach Christ as he had never done before. The following entry in his journal shows the rate at which he started; and he kept it up for over a half century:

Sunday, 17th, I began to declare again in my own country the glad tidings of salvation, preaching three times, and afterward expounding the Holy Scriptures to a large company in the Minories. On Monday I rejoiced to meet our little

society, which now consisted of thirty-two persons. The next day I went to the condemned felons at Newgate, and offered them a free salvation. In the evening I went to a society in Bear Yard, and preached repentance and remission of sins. The next evening I spoke the truth in love at a society in Aldersgate street, etc.

So little ground is there for the insinuation, often made, that he "early formed the scheme of making himself the head of a sect:" Wesley seems to have had no plan beyond doing the duty that lay next to him, and waiting on Providence for the next step. He was free to duty. His fellowship supported him, and no public collections or private contributions were needed. Watson says: "If he had any plan at all at this time, beyond what circumstances daily opened to him, and from which he might infer the path of duty, it was to revive religion in the Church to which he belonged. Wherever he was invited he preached the obsolete doctrine of salvation by grace through faith." In London great crowds followed him; the clergy generally excepted to his statement of the doctrine; the "genteel" part of his audiences were offended at the bustle of crowded congregations; and soon almost all the churches of the metropolis, one after another, were shut against him. He had, however, largely labored in various parts of the metropolis in churches, rooms, houses, and prisons, and the effects produced were powerful and lasting. A month subsequent to his return, he wrote as follows to his Herrnhut friends:

We are endeavoring here to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ. Fourteen have been added to us since our return, so that we have now eight bands, all of whom seek for salvation only in the blood of Christ. . . Though my brother and I are not permitted to preach in most of the churches in London, yet there are others left, wherein we have liberty to speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Nor hath he left himself without other witnesses of his grace and truth. Ten ministers I know now in England who lay the right foundation—"the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Over and above whom I have found one Anabaptist, and one, if not two, of the teachers among the Presbyterians here, who, I hope, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and teach the way of God in truth.

This shows that Wesley thought there were other clergymen besides himself who were evangelical, and also, though converted, that he still retained enough of his High-church prejudice to make a difference between Church of England "*ministers*," and Presbyterian "*teachers*."

In December Whitefield arrived in England from America. On hearing of his return, his friend "hastened to London," and they again "took sweet counsel together," and encouraged each



other in the service of their common Master. Whitefield was not a little delighted to find a great increase of the work of God, both as to light and love, doctrine and practice. He found that those who had been awakened by his preaching a year ago had "grown strong men in Christ, by the ministrations of his dear friends and fellow-laborers, John and Charles Wesley." The old doctrine, of justification by faith only, had been much revived; and he ended the eventful year of 1738 by preaching and expounding, during the last week of it, not fewer than twenty-seven times. But the churches closed up behind him. In three days five were denied him, and he too, like the Wesleys, resorted to the "society-meetings," and their closer fellowship.

Wesley describes a scene at one of these meetings reminding us of the Pentecostal baptism, by which the apostles were "endued with power from on high" for their mission. He says, January 1, 1739, Messrs. Hutchins, Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, and his brother Charles, were present with him at a love-feast in Fetter-lane, with sixty of the brethren. About three in the morning, as they were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon them, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as they had recovered a little from the awe and amazement which the presence of the Divine Majesty had inspired, they broke out with one voice: "We praise thee, O God! we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." Whitefield exclaims: "It was a Pentecostal season indeed!" And he adds, respecting these "society-meetings," that "sometimes whole nights were spent in prayer. Often have we been filled as with new wine, and often have I seen them overwhelmed with the Divine Presence, and cry out, 'Will God indeed dwell with men upon earth? How dreadful is this place! This is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven!'" January 5, seven of the despised Methodist clergymen (probably the seven just mentioned) held a conference at Islington, on several matters of great importance; and after prayer and fasting, "we parted," says Whitefield, "with a full conviction that God was going to do great things among us"—a conviction which was soon verified.

Incredible as it may seem, John Wesley, in that very church, a few days afterward solemnly and rather demonstratively re-baptized five Presbyterians, who had received *lay baptism* in their

infancy—that is, in the jargon of apostolic succession, they had been baptized by Dissenting ministers—*possibly* by his own grandfather, Dr. Annesley! Charles, about the same time, gave *episcopal* baptism to a woman who was dissatisfied with her *lay* baptism; denominating the ordinance “hypothetical baptism”—that is, Christian baptism, provided the former administration of the ordinance by a Dissenting minister were not in accordance with the mind of God. To the discomfort of the archbishop, it was noised about that this was done by his special sanction. The thing was rendered unpopular just then by its connection with Methodism. The two brothers got a sharp lecture from his lordship. He strongly disapproved of their practice of rebaptizing persons who had been baptized by Dissenters, and showed himself, in this respect, if not more liberal, at least better versed in ecclesiastical law and usage than the two honest and ardent young Methodists. More High-church nonsense! But the day of light and enlargement is at hand, and Wesley will come out of that. The habitual attitude of a man toward the truth is more decisive of character than any opinions he may happen to hold at a given time. If he is loyal to the truth, willing to know it and do it, the truth will make him free. St. Paul, for all such cases of prejudice and error, gives a solid ground for hopeful forbearance: “And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”

Whitefield wished to take collections for his Orphan-house, but only two or three churches still remained at his command. Preaching in one of them with “great freedom of heart and clearness of voice,” while nearly a thousand people stood outside the edifice, and hundreds went away for want of room, an idea occurred to him not included in the plan of the sermon. “This,” he says, “put me first upon thinking of preaching without doors. I mentioned it to some friends, who looked upon it as a mad notion. However, we knelt down and prayed that nothing might be done rashly. Hear and answer, O Lord, for thy name’s sake!”

Shut out of the London churches, he set off to Bristol. Popular as he had once been there, his Methodism now met the usual disfavor and result. The chancellor distinctly threatened that, if he continued to preach or expound in the diocese without license, he should first be suspended and then expelled. This was the turning-point. Shut out of the Bristol churches, he went,

on February 17, and preached, in the open air, to two hundred colliers at Kingswood. This was a bold step—a shocking departure from Church rules and usages. The Rubicon was passed. A clergyman had dared to be so irregular as to preach in the open air! At the second Kingswood service, Whitefield says he had two thousand people to hear him; and at the third, four thousand; while, at the fifth service, the four thousand were increased to ten. He declares he never preached with greater power. Day after day, and from place to place, he preached to congregations that no house could hold. March 18, his congregation at Rose Green was estimated at not less than twenty thousand, to whom he preached nearly an hour and a half. A gentleman loaned him a large bowling-green in the heart of Bristol, and here he preached to seven or eight thousand people. All this transpired within six weeks, and at nearly all these strange and enormous gatherings Whitefield made a collection for his Orphan-house in Georgia.

He took courage from the reflection that he was imitating the example of Christ, who had a mountain for his pulpit and the heavens for a sounding-board. “Blessed be God,” he writes, “that the ice is now broke, and I have now taken the field. Some may censure me, but is there not a cause? Pulpits are denied, and the poor colliers are ready to perish for lack of knowledge.”

Kingswood was formerly a royal chase, containing between three and four thousand acres; but it had been gradually appropriated by the several lords whose estates encircled it. The deer had disappeared, and the greater part of the wood also; coal-mines had been discovered, and it was now inhabited by a race of people differing as much from those of the surrounding country in dialect as in appearance. They had no place of worship—for Kingswood was three miles distant from the parish church—and were famous for neither fearing God nor regarding man. Their condition was desperate.

When the Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield first gave indications of an extraordinary zeal for the spread of religion, it was said to them: “If you wish to convert heathens, go to Kingswood.” The challenge was accepted, and their success among this brutally ignorant and wicked people, for whose salvation no man cared, was an event of the greatest significance. It encouraged them to take hold of the worst cases and classes. None were



henceforth considered beyond reach. The Lord thus increased the faith of the preachers; and also put an argument in the mouths of their friends, and a practical demonstration before the world of the saving and transforming power of the gospel, at the very outset of the Methodist revival.

Whitefield's marvelous powers as an orator found their full play in this new arena, and his poetic spirit felt the grandeur of the scene and its surroundings. The moral effect still more deeply impressed him. Having no righteousness of their own to trust in, the poor colliers were glad to hear that Christ was a friend to publicans, and came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. He could see the effect of his words by the white gutters made by the tears which trickled down their blackened cheeks, for they came unwashed out of the coal-pits to hear him. Hundreds of them were brought under deep religious impressions, which resulted in their happy conversion and thorough reformation.

He wrote Wesley to come to his help. Other cities were to be visited by him, and he wished his old friend to be his successor at Bristol. Wesley hesitated, took counsel of his brother and friends, prayed over it, and went. Saturday, March 31, he reached Bristol, and met Whitefield. Referring to this interview, Wesley observes: "I could scarcely reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."

Wesley (still in a house) continues: "In the evening (Mr. Whitefield being gone) I began expounding our Lord's Sermon on the Mount (one pretty remarkable precedent of field-preaching, though I suppose there were churches at that time also) to a little society which was accustomed to meet once or twice a week in Nicholas street."

Such were the prejudices and the hesitation of the man who, for between fifty and sixty years, proved himself the greatest field-preacher that ever lived. Monday, April 2d, at four in the afternoon, he "submitted to be more vile," he says, and proclaimed in the open air the glad tidings of salvation, from a little eminence in a ground adjoining the city, to about three thousand

people. His text befitted the occasion: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." In a few days more, he was standing on the top of Hannam Mount, in Kingswood, proclaiming: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price!" and in the afternoon of that same day he again stood up amid five thousand, and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink!"

Whitefield, committing his outdoor congregations to Wesley, left for Wales to work on the same line of things. As he passed through Kingswood, the colliers stopped him; they had prepared an "entertainment" for him, and offered subscriptions for a charity school to be established among them. Laying, at their request, a corner-stone for the building, he knelt down on the ground and prayed that the gates of hell might not prevail against it; to which rough voices responded "Amen."

With the exception of brief visits to London in June, September, and November, and of a short tour into Wales, Wesley spent from April to the end of 1739 in Bristol and its neighborhood, and delivered about five hundred discourses and expositions in the nine months, only eight of which were in "consecrated places." His preaching plan was as follows: An exposition to one or other of the Bristol societies every night, and preaching every Sunday morning, and every Monday and Saturday afternoon. At Kingswood (including Hannam Mount, Rose Green, and Two Mile Hill), he preached twice every Sabbath, and also every alternate Tuesday and Friday. At Baptist Mills (a suburb of Bristol), he preached every Friday; at Bath, once a fortnight, on Tuesday; and at Pensford, once a fortnight, on Thursday. Besides this, every morning he read prayers and preached at the prison.

When his brother returned from Herrnhut, Charles Wesley met him with great joy in London, and they "compared their experience in the things of God." He now first began to preach extempore. Islington was one of the few London churches which had a rector in sympathy with Methodism, and Charles accepted a curacy under him. But the church-wardens, with the counte-

nance of the bishop, soon ousted him, and he was thrown, without knowing why, into the current of great events. Protesting against the intolerance of man, by copying the example of man's Redeemer, he too went forth into the fields calling sinners to repentance. Little did Charles dream what was before him, when he made this entry in his journal: "March 28th. We strove to dissuade my brother from going to Bristol, to which he was pressingly invited, from an unaccountable fear that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly to whatever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out, recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him. I desired to die with him."

His holding forth in society-meetings and in private houses, and his irregular way of saving souls, could not long escape notice. Whilst John Wesley was still at Bristol, Charles had a painful interview at Lambeth with the archbishop. His grace took no exceptions to his doctrine, but condemned the irregularity of his proceedings, and even hinted at excommunication. This threw him into great perplexity of mind, until Whitefield, with characteristic boldness, urged him to preach "in the fields the next Sunday; by which step he would break down the bridge, render his retreat difficult or impossible, and be forced to fight his way forward." This advice was followed. He writes:

June 24th, I prayed and went forth in the name of Jesus Christ. I found near a thousand helpless sinners waiting for the word in Moorfields. I invited them in my Master's words, as well as name: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." The Lord was with me, even me, the meanest of his messengers, according to his promise. At St. Paul's, the psalms, lessons, etc., for the day, put new life into me; and so did the sacrament. My load was gone, and all my doubts and scruples. God shone on my path, and I knew this was his will concerning me. I walked to Kennington Common, and cried to multitudes upon multitudes: "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." The Lord was my strength, and my mouth, and my wisdom. O that all would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness!

At Oxford, the dean rebuked and threatened him for his field-preaching; but he seized the opportunity of bearing his testimony to justification by faith, preaching with great boldness before the university. On his return to London, he resumed field-preaching in Moorfields, and on Kennington Common. At one time it was computed that as many as ten thousand persons were collected, and great numbers were roused to a serious inquiry



after religion. His word was occasionally attended with an overwhelming influence.

The three great preachers are now liberated. Thanks to bigotry! God overrules the wrath of man. These things shall turn out for the furtherance of the gospel. "It was by field-preaching," remarks a thoughtful critic of the movement then dating, "and in no other possible way, that England could be roused from its spiritual slumber, or Methodism spread over the country, and rooted where it spread. The men who commenced and achieved this arduous service—and they were scholars and gentlemen—displayed a courage far surpassing that which carries the soldier through the hail-storm of the battle-field. Ten thousand might more easily be found who would confront a battery than two who, with the sensitiveness of education about them, could mount a table by the road-side, give out a psalm, and gather a mob."

"The field-preaching of Wesley and Whitefield, in 1739," says Isaac Taylor, "was the event whence the religious epoch, now current, must date its commencement. Back to the events of that time must we look, necessarily, as often as we seek to trace to its source what is most characteristic of the present time."

[Wesley's Journals; Tyerman's *Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*; and Watson's *Life of Wesley*, furnish the substance of this Chapter.]

## CHAPTER XII.

Difficulties and Triumphs of Field-preachers—Bodily Agitations: How Accounted for—Active Enemies—Lukewarm Friends—The Word Prevails.

NO wonder Methodists were "made a gazing stock." Their style of preaching and their doctrine were novel. "Being convinced," writes Wesley, "of that important truth which is the foundation of all real religion, that 'by grace we are saved through faith,' we immediately began declaring it to others. Indeed, we could hardly speak of any thing else, either in public or private. It shone upon our minds with so strong a light that it was our constant theme. It was our daily subject, both in verse and prose; and we vehemently defended it against all mankind. But in doing this, we were assaulted and abused on every side. We were stoned in the streets, and several times narrowly escaped with our lives. In sermons, newspapers, and pamphlets of all kinds, we were painted as unheard-of monsters." Hutton's *Memoirs* gives a lively description:

In the year 1739 open-air preaching commenced in England; for the clergy had closed all their churches against the Methodists, and the Bishop of London (Dr. Edmund Gibson) had inhibited any Methodist preacher from becoming an assistant (adjunct) at Islington Church. Both bishop and clergy remained steadfast in their determination to eradicate Methodism, with its advocates, from their pulpits. The congregations which flocked to the open-air preaching were composed of every description of persons from all parts of the town, who without the slightest attempt at order assembled, crying "Hurrah!" with one breath, and with the next bellying and bursting into tears on account of their sins; some poking each other's ribs, laughing, and throwing stones and dirt, and almost pressing one another to death; others joyously shouting "Halleluiahs," etc. In fact, it was a jumble of extremes of good and evil; and so distracted alike were both preachers and hearers, that it was enough to make one cry to God for his interference. After awhile matters proceeded less disorderly, a tolerable silence prevailed, and many present, who had come prepared to hurl stones at the preacher, received something in their hearts for time and eternity. Here thieves, prostitutes, fools, people of every class, several men of distinction, a few of the learned, merchants, and numbers of poor people who had never entered a place of worship, assembled in these crowds and became godly.

"The messengers of salvation who go into the highways and hedges seeking lost souls, must take people as they find them."

That was doubtless a disorderly multitude which heard the words, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The congregation that flocked to the sea-side, "without the slightest attempt at order," were privileged to hear the original of the Parable of the Sower. The multitude to whom the Sermon on the Mount was addressed was not select. When the Master looked upon these masses of human beings—restless, unhappy, ignorant—he was "moved with compassion" for them as sheep having no shepherd. Similar feelings become his servants. Æsthetic taste must be held in abeyance, and clerical dignity stand aside; the *people* must be reached and subdued to the gospel; and Methodism, by its birth and baptism, is pledged to this work. The author of Hutton's Memoirs was a Moravian, of social culture, affecting "stillness;" he delighted to instruct, and was capable of instructing, the choice spirits that could be gathered into a "society-room," or the parlor on "College street, Westminster," or the cosy office of his book-store. An agency is wanted that is bolder and more aggressive; for the world will never be reached and converted at that rate. "Multitudes" must be added to the Church daily. The acute observer before quoted remarks:

Within the Moravian circle, the prevailing force is centripetal; within the Wesleyan, it is centrifugal. The Church of the Brethren has conserved within its small inclosures an idea of what was imagined to be pristine Christianity; and it has moored itself, here and there, in sheltered nooks of the world, amid the wide waters of general impiety or formality; but no such tranquil witness-bearing to primitive principles could have satisfied Wesley's evangelical zeal; and the Methodism which he framed was an invasive encampment upon the field of the world.\*

(While enemies were ready to revile, those who ought to have been friends were cautious in their indorsement.) Even the good Dr. Doddridge wrote (May 24, 1739): "I think the Methodists sincere; I hope some may be reformed, instructed, and made serious by their means. I saw Mr. Whitefield preaching on Kennington Common last week to an attentive multitude, and heard much of him at Bath; but, supposing him sincere and in good earnest, I still fancy that he is but a *weak* man—much too positive, says rash things, and is bold and enthusiastic. I am most heartily glad to hear that any *real* good is done anywhere to the souls of men," etc. Now and then a more outspoken Christian man ap-

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\* Wesley and Methodism.



peared. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster, had in him the savor of Richard Baxter. Under the date of September 17, he writes, concerning the two Wesleys, Whitefield, and Ingham: "The common people flock to hear them, and in most places hear them gladly. They commonly preach once or twice every day, and expound the Scriptures in the evening to religious societies, who have their society-rooms for that purpose." Charles at this time visited his brother at Bristol, and it so happens that the manner of his preaching is described by Williams, whom curiosity and a religious temper led to hear him in a field near the city:

I found him standing on a table-board, in an erect posture, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven in prayer. He prayed with uncommon fervor, fluency, and variety of proper expressions. He then preached about an hour in such a manner as I scarce ever heard any man preach. Though I have heard many a finer sermon, according to the common taste or acceptation of sermons, I never heard any man discover such evident signs of a vehement desire, or labor so earnestly to convince his hearers that they were all by nature in a sinful, lost, undone state. He showed how great a change faith in Christ would produce in the whole man, and that every man who is in Christ—that is, who believes in him unto salvation—is a new creature. Nor did he fail to press how ineffectual their faith would be to justify them, unless it wrought by love, purified their hearts, and was productive of good works. With uncommon fervor he acquitted himself as an ambassador of Christ, beseeching them in his name, and praying them in his stead, to be reconciled to God. And although he used no notes, nor had any thing in his hands but a Bible, yet he delivered his thoughts in a rich, copious variety of expression, and with so much propriety that I could not observe any thing incoherent or inanimate through the whole performance, which he concluded with singing, prayer, and the usual benediction.

In the evening the same competent and appreciative hearer accompanied Wesley to the society-meeting. The whole service took up nearly two hours; "but never, sure," says Williams, "did I hear such praying, never did I see or hear such evident marks of fervency in the service of God. At the close of every petition, a serious Amen, like a gentle rushing sound of waters, ran through the whole audience with such a solemn air as quite distinguished it from whatever of that nature I have heard at tending the responses in the Church-service. If there be such a thing as heavenly music upon earth, I heard it there." Such a testimony, from a man so devout and justly famed as "the Kidderminster carpet-weaver," is quite as trustworthy as any of an opposite character from either Bishop Gibson or any priest then

dozing on the walls of Zion, or from Doddridge, or other learned preachers of Dissent then dying of respectability.

Field-preaching called into action other qualities besides the power to speak. (The annoyances were infinite until the cause had triumphed.) Missiles of stones and brickbats were not the greatest hinderances. Sometimes a furious ox was let loose into the crowd; or recruiting officers, with drum and fife, would pass through; or a mob of lewd fellows of the baser sort, fired with whisky, and led on by the "parson," with the watch-word "Fight for the Church," would intrude. On one occasion, John Wesley having taken his stand in the open air to preach, two men, hired for the purpose, began to sing ballads. Wesley and his friends met this by singing a psalm, thus drowning one noise with another.

At Bath he encountered a politer difficulty. "Beau Nash," master of ceremonies at that fashionable resort—he who prescribed ball-dresses for ladies and gentlemen, and the number of dances to be danced—gave out that on Wesley's next "appointment" there should be some fun: the accomplished rake and gamester meant to make sport of the preacher and stop him. "By this report," says Wesley, "I gained a much larger audience, among whom were many of the rich and great. I told them plainly the Scripture had concluded them all under sin; high and low, rich and poor, one with another. Many of them seemed to be a little surprised, and were sinking apace into seriousness," when the "Beau," in his immense white hat, appeared, and asked by what authority he dared to do what he was doing. Wesley replied: "By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by him who is now Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid his hands upon me and said, 'Take thou authority to preach the gospel.'" "But this," said Nash, "is a conventicle, and contrary to act of parliament." "No," answered Wesley; "conventicles are seditious meetings, but here is no sedition; therefore, it is not contrary to act of parliament." "I say it is!" cried the hero of Bath; "and besides, your preaching frightens people out of their wits." "Sir," said Wesley, "did you ever hear me preach?" "No." "How, then, can you judge of what you never heard?" "I judge," he answered, "by common report." "Common report," replied Wesley, "is not enough. Give me leave to ask you, sir, is not your name Nash?" "It is," said he. "Sir," retorted Wesley, "I dare not judge of you by common

report." The master of ceremonies was worsted; upon which an old woman begged Wesley to allow *her* to answer him; and, amid her taunts, the resplendent master of ceremonies sneaked away. "As I returned," says Wesley, "the street was full of people hurrying to and fro, and speaking great words; but when any of them asked, 'Which is he?' and I replied, 'I am he,' they were immediately silent."

Whitefield called preaching in Moorfields "attacking Satan in one of his strongholds;" and this he did on Sundays when in London. Once the table which had been placed for him was broken in pieces by the crowd. He took his stand, therefore, upon a wall which divided the upper and lower Moorfields, and preached without interruption. His favorite ground upon weekdays was Kennington Common, and there prodigious multitudes gathered together to hear him. He had sometimes fourscore carriages, very many horsemen, and from thirty to forty thousand persons on foot; and both there and in Moorfields, on his Sunday preachings, when he collected for the Orphan-house, so many half-pence were given him by his poor auditors that he was wearied in receiving them, and they were more than one man could carry home. John Wesley had not yet faced a London outdoor congregation. On a brief visit to the metropolis he found Whitefield triumphing gloriously, and on the day after his arrival accompanied him to Blackheath, expecting to hear him preach. When they were upon the ground, where about twelve or fourteen thousand persons were assembled, Whitefield desired him to preach in his stead. Wesley was reluctant; nature recoiled, but he did not refuse. He says: "I preached on my favorite subject—'Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' I was greatly moved with compassion for the rich that were there, to whom I made a particular application. Some of them seemed to attend, while others drove away in their coaches from so uncouth a preacher." Whitefield, in his journal, says: "I had the pleasure of introducing my honored and reverend friend, Mr. John Wesley, to preach at Blackheath. The Lord give him ten thousand times more success than he has given me! I went to bed rejoicing that another fresh inroad was made into Satan's territories by Mr. Wesley's following me in field-preaching in London as well as in Bristol."



It is a noteworthy circumstance that though the preaching of Charles Wesley and of Whitefield was as faithful as that of John Wesley, and far more impassioned, yet no such "signs" attended their ministry as were attendant on his. Such items as these are found in his journal (1739):

May 1. Many were offended again, and indeed much more than before. Of those who had been long in darkness, ten persons, I afterward found, then began to say in faith, "My Lord and my God." A Quaker who stood by was not a little displeased at the dissimulation of those creatures, and was biting his lips and knitting his brows, when he dropped down as thunderstruck. The agony he was in was even terrible to behold.

May 21. Perhaps it might be because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive any thing unless we see it with our eyes and hear it with our ears, that God, in tender condescension to our weakness, suffered so many outward signs at the very time when he wrought this inward change, to be continually seen and heard among us. But although they saw "signs and wonders" (for so I must term them), yet many would not believe. They could not indeed *deny* the facts, but they could *explain* them away. Some said: "These were purely *natural* effects; the people fainted away only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms;" and others were "sure it was all a cheat; they might help it if they would; else, why were these things only in their private societies? why were they not done in the face of the sun?" To-day our Lord answered for himself—for, while I was enforcing these words, "Be still, and know that I am God," he began to make bare his arm—not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One, and another, and another, was struck to the earth, exceedingly trembling at the presence of his power; others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, "What must we do to be saved?" And in less than an hour seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time, were rejoicing and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the God of their salvation. In the evening I went on to declare what God had already done, in proof of that important truth that he is "not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance." Another person dropped down, close to one who was a strongasserter of the contrary doctrine. While he stood astonished at the sight, a little boy near him was seized in the same manner. A young man who stood up behind fixed his eyes on him, and sunk down himself as one dead, but soon began to roar out, and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. His name was Thomas Maxfield. Except J——n H——n, I never saw one so torn of the evil one. I was called from supper to one who, feeling in herself such a conviction as she never had known before, had run out of the society in all haste that she might not expose herself. But the hand of God followed her still; so that after going a few steps, she was forced to be carried home; and when she was there, grew worse and worse. She was in a violent agony when we came. We called upon God, and her soul found rest. I think twenty-nine in all had their heaviness turned into joy this day.

Maxfield will be heard from again. The case of John Haydon,

referred to, occurred a few weeks before, and is told in the journal of May 2:

He was a man of a regular life, one that constantly attended the public prayers and sacrament, and was zealous for the Church, and against dissenters of every denomination. Being informed that people fell into strange fits at the societies, he came to see and judge for himself. But he was less satisfied than before; inso-much that he went about to his acquaintance, one after another, till one in the morning, and labored above measure to convince them it was a delusion of the devil. We were going home, when one met us in the street and informed us that J——n H——n was fallen raving mad. It seems he had sat down to dinner, but had a mind first to end a sermon he had borrowed, on "Salvation by Faith." In reading the last page, he changed color, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly, and beating himself against the ground. The neighbors were alarmed, and flocked together to the house. Between one and two I came in and found him on the floor, the room being full of people, whom his wife would have kept without, but he cried aloud: "No! let them all come; let all the world see the just judgment of God!" Two or three men were holding him as well as they could. "Ay, this is he who I said was a deceiver of the people. But God has overtaken me. I said it was all a delusion, but this is no delusion." We all betook ourselves to prayer. His pangs ceased, and both his body and soul were set at liberty. . . . Returning to J——n H——n, we found his voice was lost, and his body weak as that of an infant; but his soul was in peace, full of love, and "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."

Whitefield heard of these things, and was not pleased; for, as usual, gross misrepresentations had gone out. He visited Bristol, and Wesley writes: "But next day he had an opportunity of informing himself better; for, in the application of his sermon, four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion; a second trembled exceedingly; the third had strong convulsions all over his body, but made no noise, unless by groans; the fourth, equally convulsed, called upon God with strong cries and tears. From this time, I trust, we shall all suffer God to carry on his own work in the way that pleaseth him." Whitefield was silenced, if not satisfied. If it was so in England, we shall see greater things than these in America when the masses are reached by camp-meetings and field-preachers of the old Methodist type. There was much reasoning about these physical exercises in connection with spiritual. Men of the world discoursed flippantly of fanaticism, enthusiasm, zoo-mesmerism, and such like, always to the discredit of the ministry under which these things occur; the pious patterns of order and stillness were scandalized, and fools mocked. The words of Richard Watson are commended to them all:

The extraordinary manner in which some persons were frequently affected under Mr. Wesley's preaching as well as that of his coadjutors, now created much discussion, and to many gave much offense. Some were seized with trembling; others sunk down, and uttered loud and piercing cries; others fell into a kind of agony. In some instances, whilst prayer was offered for them, they rose up with a sudden change of feeling, testifying that they had "redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins." Mr. Samuel Wesley, who denied the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, treated these things, in a correspondence with his brother, alternately with sarcasm and serious severity, and particularly attacked the doctrine of assurance. In this controversy Mr. John Wesley attaches no weight whatever to these outward agitations, but contends that he is bound to believe the profession made by many who had been so affected, of an inward change, because that had been confirmed by their subsequent conduct and spirit.\*

Wesley unquestionably believed in special effusions of the influence of the Holy Spirit upon congregations and individuals, producing powerful emotions of mind, expressed in some instances by bodily affections; and there is the best authority—the Bible—for this belief. Jonathan Edwards, after the great awakening in his day, and mostly under his ministry, had to defend himself and his coadjutors, and the work itself, in a learned treatise on the subject of "Surprising Conversions." Watson continues:

That cases of real enthusiasm occurred, at this and subsequent periods, is indeed allowed. There are always nervous, dreamy, and excitable people to be found; and the emotion which was produced among those who were really so "pricked in the heart" as to cry with a sincerity equal to that which was felt by those of old, "What shall we do to be saved?" would often be communicated to such persons by natural sympathy. No one could be blamed for this unless he had encouraged the excitement for its own sake, or taught the people to regard it as a sign of grace, which most assuredly Mr. Wesley never did. Nor is it correct to represent these effects, genuine and factitious together, as peculiar to Methodism. A great impression was made by the preaching of the Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield in almost all places where they went. Thousands in the course of a few years, and of those too who had lived in the greatest unconcern as to spiritual things, and were most ignorant and depraved in their habits, were recovered from their vices, and the moral appearance of whole neighborhoods was changed. Yet the effects were not without precedent, even in those circumstances in which they have been thought most singular and exceptionable. Great and rapid results of this kind were produced in the first ages of Christianity, but not without "outcries," and strong corporeal as well as mental emotions—nay, and extravagances too. Such objectors might have known that like effects often accompanied the preaching of eminent men at the Reformation, and that many of the Puritan and Non-conformist ministers had similar successes in large districts in our own country.

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\* Watson's Life of Wesley.



They might have known that in Scotland, and also among the grave Presbyterians of New England, previous to the rise of Methodism, such impressions had not unfrequently been produced by the ministry of faithful men. It may be laid down as a principle established by fact that whenever a zealous and faithful ministry is raised up, after a long spiritual dearth, the early effects of that ministry are not only powerful, but often attended with extraordinary circumstances; nor are such extraordinary circumstances necessarily extravagances because they are not common. It is neither irrational nor unscriptural to suppose that times of great national darkness and depravity should require a strong remedy, and that the attention of the people should be roused by circumstances which could not fail to be noticed by the most unthinking. We do not attach primary importance to secondary circumstances, but they are not to be wholly disregarded. The Lord was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice; yet that still small voice might not have been heard, except by minds roused from their inattention by the shaking of the earth and the sounding of the storm.

But even the liturgy and the ministry of the objectors pray for a measure of Divine influence, a degree of spiritual power, to bless the word preached, and to open the ears and hearts of the people, inclining them to keep God's law. On this ground—the lowest any can take and be called orthodox—Watson answers: "If, however, no special and peculiar effusion of Divine influence on the minds of many of Mr. Wesley's hearers be supposed; if we only assume the exertion of that ordinary influence which must accompany the labors of every minister of Christ to render them successful in saving men—the strong emotions often produced by the preaching of the founder of Methodism might be accounted for on principles very different from those adopted by many objectors. The multitudes to whom he preached were generally grossly ignorant of the gospel, and he poured upon their minds a flood of light; his discourses were plain, pointed, earnest, and affectionate; the feeling produced was deep, piercing, and, in numberless cases, such as we have no right, if we believe the Bible, to attribute to any other cause than that inward operation of God with his truth which alone can render human means effectual."

A Yorkshire mason, John Nelson, came up to London, working at his trade. His labor amply supported him, and he and his wife lived, he says, "in a good way, as the world calls it—that is, in peace and plenty, and love to each other." Though he had experienced neither sorrow nor misfortune of any kind, still he thought that rather than live thirty years more like the thirty which had passed, he would choose to be strangled. The fear of

judgment made him wish that he had never been born. The Established Church not meeting his case, he heard the Dissenters of various sorts, went to the Roman Catholics, and even attended Quakers' meetings: all to no purpose. As for the Jews, he thought it was useless to try them. He was settling down into a desperate state. At this time Whitefield preached outdoors, and he heard him, but was no better. "I loved the man," says Nelson, "so that if any one offered to disturb him, I was ready to fight for him, but I did not understand him; yet I got some hope of mercy, so that I was encouraged to pray on, and spend my leisure hours in reading the Scriptures." He slept little, and often awoke from horrible dreams, dripping with sweat and shivering with terror. Thus he continued, till Wesley preached, for the first time, in Moorfields. "O," said he, "that was a blessed morning for my soul! As soon as he got upon the stand, he stroked back his hair and turned his face toward where I stood, and I thought he fixed his eyes on me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock; and when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me."

Wesley, in winding up his sermons, pointing his exhortations and driving them home, spoke as if he were addressing himself to an individual; so that every one to whom the condition which he described was applicable felt as if he were singled out; and the preacher's words, like the eyes of a portrait, seemed to look at every beholder.) "Who art thou," said the preacher, "that now seest and feelest thine inward and outward ungodliness? Thou art the man! I want thee for my Lord, I challenge *thee* for a child of God by faith. The Lord hath need of *thee*. Thou who feelest thou art just fit for hell art just fit to advance His glory—the glory of His free grace, justifying the ungodly, and him that worketh not. O come quickly! Believe in the Lord Jesus, and *thou*, even *thou*, art reconciled to God." When the sermon was ended, Nelson said within himself: "This man can tell the secrets of my heart. He hath not left me there, for he hath shown the remedy, even the blood of Jesus." His acquaintances professed alarm at his going too far in religion, and wished he had never heard Wesley, for it would be his ruin. "I told them," said he, "I had reason to bless God that ever he was born, for by hearing him I was made sensible that my business

in this world is to get well out of it; and as for my trade, health, wisdom, and all things in this world, they are no blessings to me, any further than as so many instruments to help me, by the grace of God, to work out my salvation." The family where he lodged were disposed to get rid of him, being afraid some mischief would come from "so much praying and fuss as he made about religion." He procured money and went to pay them what he owed them, but they would not let him leave. "What if John is right, and we are wrong?" they asked among themselves. "If God has done for you any thing more than for us, show us how we may find the same mercy;" and he was soon leading them to hear Wesley. He even hired a fellow-workman to hear him; and the mechanic afterward assured him that it was the best deed, both for himself and his wife, that any one had ever done for them. Fasting once a week, he gave the food saved to the poor. He went to Birstal, after his conversion, to visit his family, that he might recommend to them and his neighbors religion in person. His relations and acquaintances soon began to inquire what he thought of this new faith, and whether he believed there was any such thing as a man's knowing that his sins were forgiven. John told them, point-blank, that this new faith, as they called it, was the old faith of the gospel, and that he himself was as sure his sins were forgiven as he could be of the shining of the sun. Sitting in his door, after the day's labor, he read to those who came, and told his experience, and explained the Scriptures. The congregations increased, many were converted, and he became a preacher without knowing it, and was the pioneer and the chief founder of Methodism in that portion of England in which it has had signal success down to the present time.

Even Southey had a genuine admiration for some of Wesley's lay preachers; he appreciated the heroic element in them; and, after giving a particular account of Nelson's conversion, he lingers about the man that had as "brave a heart as ever Englishman was blessed with." One of Wesley's first-fruits in field-preaching, John Nelson himself became a successful field-preacher, and by him "much people was added unto the Lord."



## CHAPTER XIII.

Church Building—Titles of Property—The Foundry—Religious Societies—Fetter-lane—Threats of Excommunication: How Treated—Separation from the Moravians—Strange Doctrines—Stillness—Means of Grace.

**K**INGSWOOD SCHOOL, of which Whitefield laid the corner-stone, was finished in a year. The Orphan-house yielded occasionally to the claims of the Colliers' School, and public collections of about £100 were made by him. As for the rest, the building and management devolved on Wesley. For months wherever he went he took subscriptions for this charity, which ultimately grew to greater dimensions than he foresaw.

Another enterprise of historic interest he began as well as finished. It was an important step toward the formation of a separate denomination, though he entertained no design beyond the supply of an immediate want. The awakening, conversion, and addition of so large a number of persons to the religious societies in Bristol made necessary a larger room, in which they might assemble together for worship. A piece of ground was procured near St. James's church-yard, Broadmead, and the first stone was laid May 12th, 1739, "with the voice of praise and thanksgiving." Wesley says: "I had not at first the least apprehension or design of being personally engaged either in the expense of the building or in the direction of it;" he having appointed eleven feoffees (trustees), by whom the burdens should be borne. But it soon appeared that the work would be at a stand if he did not take upon himself the payment of the workmen; and he was presently encumbered with a debt of more than £150. The subscription of the Bristol societies did not amount to a fourth part of that sum. In another and more important point, his friends in London, and Whitefield especially, had been farther-sighted than himself; they represented to him that the trustees would always have it in their power to turn him out of the room after he had built it, if he did not preach to their liking; and they declared that they would have nothing to do with the building, nor contribute any thing toward it, unless he instantly discharged all trustees, and did every thing in his own name.

Though Wesley had not foreseen this consequence, he immediately perceived the wisdom of his friends' advice, and to avoid the evils of congregational fickleness and tyranny, he called together the trustees, canceled the writings without any opposition on their part, and took the whole trust, as well as the whole management, into his own hands. "Money," he says, "it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring it; but I knew 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;' and in his name set out, nothing doubting." This was a matter of great importance, for in this manner nearly all the chapels erected in the early part of his career were vested in him; a thing involving serious responsibility, which was honorably fulfilled; for trusts were afterward created, and by the "Deed of Declaration" all his interests in his chapels were transferred to the Legal Conference. Connectional Methodism, in Europe and America, is vastly indebted to the conservative principle here introduced. Church-houses are not the property of individuals, or societies, or corporations, but are held for the use of such a ministry as the Conference, representing the whole Church, may authorize and appoint. Local defections cannot close them, nor pervert them from their original design.\*

The Religious Societies often mentioned arose about the year 1667 out of an awakening that began under three pious clergymen† in London, and extended to other parts of the land. The Church of that day not affording suitable help and fellowship for the earnest seekers after salvation, they were advised by those whose ministry had been quickening and profitable to their souls "to meet together once a week, and to apply themselves to good discourse and things wherein they might edify one another." They acted upon this advice, and at every meeting made a collection for the poor. By means of the fund thus provided, numbers of poor families were relieved, sundry prisoners were set at liberty by the payment of small debts, several orphans were maintained, and a few poor scholars received assistance. These

\* Decisions in the Court of Chancery, made under this "Deed of Declaration," have given security to the property and stability to the whole economy of Wesleyan Methodism in Great Britain; and similar proceedings in American courts have settled this principle—that trustees and congregations may rebel or secede, but the Church-property remains for the use of the Church.

† Horneek, Smithies, and Beveridge.

converted persons soon found the benefit of their weekly conferences with each other. Each person related his religious experience to the rest, and thus they became the means of building themselves up in the faith of Christ. Rules were drawn up "for the better regulation of the meetings." These religious associations at one time numbered about forty in the metropolis and its vicinity. By the rules of the weekly meetings they were required to discourse only on such subjects as tended to "practical holiness, and to avoid controversy." For awhile these societies prospered greatly. Out of their religious influence and the zeal thus awakened, no less than twenty associations for the prosecution and suppression of vice seem to have arisen, which were favored by several bishops, and countenanced by the queen herself. They had been the means of keeping the spark of piety from entire extinction. But after the lapse of some years they declined, so that when Wesley commenced his evangelizing labors, although several societies still existed in London, Bristol, Dublin, and some other places, they were by no means in a state of vigor and activity. The law of moral affinity drew the Methodists to them. In their rooms and meetings in London, Bristol, and elsewhere, Whitefield and the Wesley brothers, for a few years, were accustomed to read and explain the Scriptures almost every night. They served them much the same purpose the synagogues did the first missionaries to the Gentiles—as a base of operations for beginning their work. Useful as were the Religious Societies, with their narrow and retired quarters, Methodism had outgrown that provisional arrangement in Bristol as soon also it did elsewhere; for the societies were isolated, not united; they were at the service of Methodists, but could not be under their control.

The Fetter-lane Society seems to have been like and yet unlike the others. On May 1, Wesley and a few others formed themselves into a society which met there. The rules were printed under the title of "Orders of a Religious Society, meeting in Fetter-lane; in obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Böhler. 1738." Band-rules, and other arrangements for Christian fellowship and mutual edification, on the Moravian plan, were adopted. Many seasons of great grace were enjoyed there. Monday night, after his return from Germany, Wesley's journal has this item: "I rejoiced to



meet our little society, which now consisted of thirty-two persons." Methodists and Moravians composed this society which professed to be in union with the Church of England, and went as a body, accompanied by the two Wesleys, to St. Paul's Cathedral, to receive the holy communion. But a learned mystic came in, while Wesley was at Bristol, and taught new-fangled doctrines. A man very different from Böhler was this Molther. "German stillness" stole away the hearts of the people; solifidianism and a contempt of Church orders and of Bible ordinances were openly inculcated. Separation—as we shall see—finally ensued. The Methodist element drew off and "went to their own company," and the Moravian element of the original Fetter-lane Society drew off in another direction, and from this time assumed the character of a distinct community belonging to the Church of the United Brethren.\* This proved to be an important step in the direction of a distinct, homogeneous denomination representing well-defined and vital doctrines, though such consequence was not intended at the time.

Wesley had spent part of November in London, endeavoring to compose dissensions in Fetter-lane; and whilst there, two gentlemen, then unknown to him, urged him to preach in a place called the Foundry, near Moorfields. He writes: "Sunday, November 11, I preached at eight to five or six thousand, on the spirit of bondage and the spirit of adoption; and at five in the evening to seven or eight thousand, in the place which had been the king's foundry for cannon." He was then pressed to take the place into his own hands. He did so. The purchase-money was £115; but the building being a "vast, uncouth heap of ruins," a large sum additional to this had to be expended in needful repairs; and at least £800 was raised, by systematic and hard begging, during the next few years, to pay for this cathedral of Methodism.† The band-room was behind the chapel, on the ground-floor, eighty feet long and twenty feet wide. Here the classes met; here, in winter, the five o'clock morning service was conducted; and here were held, at two o'clock, on Wednesdays and Fridays, weekly meetings for prayer. The north end of the room was used for a school, and was fitted up with desks; and at the south end was "The Book Room," for the sale

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\*Jackson's Life of C. Wesley. †Tyerman.

of Methodist publications. Over the band-room were apartments for Wesley, in which his mother spent her last years and died; and at the end of the chapel was a dwelling-house for his domestics and assistant preachers. The edifice had been a ruin for twenty years. In recasting the injured guns taken from the French in the campaigns of Marlborough, a terrible explosion blew off the roof, shook the building, and killed several of the workmen. This led to its abandonment, and the removal of the royal foundry to Woolwich. Here was really the cradle of Methodism. At Bristol the first Methodist church was begun and built. The Foundry was the first one opened for worship. Wesley says, in his introduction to the "General Rules of the Society:" "In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to me in London and desired that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come. This was the rise of the United Society." Twelve came the first night, forty the next, and soon after a hundred. While the controversy respecting the ordinances—which led to a separation from the Moravians—was going on, the Wesleys still preached to vast audiences, and with undiminished success. Conversions were numerous, and the society connected with the Foundry increased continually. Commenced about the end of November with twelve members, by the middle of June following it had increased to three hundred. The epochal events of this year justified the world-wide centenary solemnities of 1839.

Methodism now has two churches and a school-house, access to the little "rooms" of the Religious Societies here and there, and all outdoors, to preach in. The movement widens and takes shape. Its leaders are building wiser than they know, for they really love the Established Church, and have no thought of cutting loose from it. Under Providence, they meet the necessities which success creates, are detached from surroundings, and are drifting toward a compact and consistent organism. (One possible danger hangs vaguely over the heads of the leaders—suspension or excommunication.) According to the canons of the Church, no minister is allowed to preach outside of his parish without official leave. The bishop of a diocese must give license therein, or the preacher is an intruder. This canon had fallen into disuse—*sub silentio*—but it might be revived. Whitefield at Bristol, was threatened with it. He boldly reminded the author of the

official menace that another canon forbade his ministers from frequenting ale-houses and playing cards, and from other unministerial, if not unchristian, practices. Why was not *that* canon enforced? And Whitefield thundered in his field-pulpit the same day. The Bishop of London was displeased at the "irregularities" of the Methodist preachers, and said to Charles Wesley: "I have power to inhibit you." He promptly made the issue: "Does your lordship exert that power? Do you now inhibit me?" The reply was: "O why will you push me to an extreme? I do not inhibit you." After having elicited from the learned prelate that, in his opinion, the Religious Societies to which they preached were not conventicles, the poet-preacher went his way.

John Wesley was often importuned to narrow his circle of operations by taking a curacy or settling at the university. Even good men queried: Why this going about and singing psalms, and expounding, and gathering assemblies, in other men's parishes? An entry in his journal at this time points to similar interviews:

For two hours I took up my cross, in arguing with a zealous man, and laboring to convince him that I was not an enemy of the Church of England. He allowed I taught no other doctrines than those of the Church, but could not forgive my teaching them out of the church-walls. He allowed, too (which none indeed can deny who has either any regard to truth or sense of shame), that "by this teaching many souls who, till that time, were 'perishing for lack of knowledge,' have been, and are brought, 'from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.'" But he added: "No one can tell what may be hereafter; and therefore I say these things ought not to be suffered."

Honest, zealous man, believing that the salvation of souls is too dearly bought if done by a departure from Church-usages! —forgetting that Christianity, though conserved by Church-order, does not exist for the sake of it. When, by one he was bound to respect and give an answer to, Wesley was urged to settle in a college, or to accept a cure of souls, he replied: "I have no business at college, having now no office and no pupils; and it will be time enough to consider whether I ought to accept a cure of souls when one is offered to me. On scriptural grounds, I do not think it hard to justify what I am doing. God, in Scripture, commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all, see-



ing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom, then, shall I hear? God or man? If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge ye. I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation." Such was the position taken by Wesley and his co-workers. His spirit was strong in the consciousness of the moral power he was wielding by the word of God. On one occasion, he says, his soul was so enlarged that he could have cried out, in a higher sense than Archimedes, "Give me where to stand, and I will move the world."

Samuel Wesley, deprecating the irregular evangelism of his brother, wrote to his mother: "I am not afraid the Church should excommunicate him (discipline is at too low an ebb), but that he should excommunicate the Church. It is pretty near it." One compensation in the case of a lifeless Church is that the decay of discipline—an early symptom—has left it without power to resist the unusual measures which may be necessary for its renovation. At a time when dram-drinking and absentee rectors were common, and when heterodoxy, and even a thinly disguised infidelity, tainted some who were enjoying preferments, it would hardly do to revive an obsolete canon against men whose fault was that they preached the gospel to more people out-of-doors than scores of beneficed clergymen preached to within church-walls; that they taught the poor and visited the prisons, and constantly appealed to the articles and homilies of the Church for the truth of their doctrines—men of cultured minds and commanding eloquence and blameless lives. To excommunicate them was more than a hierarchy, strong and proud, but in some degree responsible to public opinion, could venture to do or seriously threaten.

The Methodists now felt the ground firm under them so far as ecclesiastical interference was concerned, and another forward movement was made, very shocking to primates and priests—the introduction of lay preachers. The fields were white to the harvest, and the laborers few. Wesley could not forbid an increase of the staff, because the new workers had not been trained in colleges, and came without surplices and gowns. No doubt he would have preferred the employment of clerics like himself; but,

in the absence of such, he was driven to adopt the measure which Providence presented, and which the Holy Spirit honored abundantly. His mission was to the *people*, and from the people the Lord furnished a ministry that sympathized with them, and could be understood by them. Again Church-order gave way to the higher necessity of saving souls. "I knew your brother well," said Robinson, the Archbishop of Armagh, when he met Charles Wesley at the Hotwells, Bristol. "I could never credit all I heard respecting him and you; but one thing in your conduct I could never account for—your employing laymen." "My lord," said Charles, "the fault is yours and your brethren's." "How so?" asked the primate. ("Because you hold your peace, and the stones cry out.") "But I am told," his Grace continued, "that they are unlearned men." "Some are," said the sprightly poet; "and so the dumb ass rebukes the prophet." His lordship said no more.\*

The New Room at Bristol, as the first Methodist meeting-house was called, was opened, and Wesley expounded and preached there daily. Of the moral condition of the congregation he wrote before leaving: "Convictions sink deeper and deeper; love and joy are more calm, even, and steady." Charles, who had been pastor of the Foundry for several months, and conjointly with Molther and others of Fetter-lane, now changed places with his brother. Wearied with the wranglings that had broken out in that Union Society about "stillness" and the ordinances, Charles was refreshed at Bristol, and especially at Kingswood. "O what simplicity," he exclaims, "is in this child-like people! A spirit of contrition and love ran through them. Here the seed has fallen upon good ground." And again, on the next Sabbath: "I went to learn Christ among our colliers, and drank into their spirit. We rejoiced for the consolation. O that our London brethren would come to school to Kingswood! These *are* what they *pretend* to be. God knows their poverty; but they are rich, and daily entering into rest, without being first brought into confusion. They do not hold it necessary to deny the weak faith in order to get the strong. Their soul truly waiteth *still* upon God, in the way of his ordinances. Ye many masters, come, learn Christ of these outcasts; for know, 'except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'"

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\* The Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley, M.A.

After repeated interviews and patient waiting, John Wesley saw that the Moravian trouble had but one solution. There was no hope of those who controlled the London Society, whatever the Brethren might be elsewhere. All was confusion. Vain janglings had done their work. The learned, subtle German mystic had his notions and clung to them, and the majority at Fetter-lane were of his way of thinking. Wesley's journal, in April, shows progress:

My brother and I went to Mr. Molther again, and spent two hours in conversation with him. He now also explicitly affirmed: 1. That there are *no degrees* in faith; that none has any faith who has ever any doubt or fear; and that none is justified till he has a clean heart, with the perpetual indwelling of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. And, 2. That every one who has not this ought, till he has it, to be *still*—that is, as he explained it, not to use the ordinances, or means of grace, so called. He also expressly asserted that to those who have a clean heart the ordinances are not a matter of duty. They are not commanded to use them; they are free; they may use them, or they may not.

Often Wesley expounded in Fetter-lane, laboring to bring them to another mind on these and cognate points, showing how unwilling he was to part with them. One who had been as a pillar "spoke largely of the great danger that attended the doing of outward works, and of the folly of people that keep running about to church and sacrament, 'as I,' said he, 'did till very lately.'" Another, whose influence was weighty, stood up in meeting and asserted, in plain terms: "1. That, till they had true faith, they ought to be still—that is (as they explained themselves), to abstain from the means of grace, as they are called; the Lord's Supper in particular. 2. That the ordinances are not means of grace, there being no other means than Christ."

Neglecting church and sermons was one of the peculiarities of this strange heresy. Once Charles Wesley invited a small company of the new faith to go with him to the house of God. The spokesman replied for himself and the rest, as they settled themselves down: "It is good for us to be *here*."

After a long conference with leading ones, even including Spangenberg, and yielding all he could for peace, Wesley records:

But I could not agree, either, that none has any faith, so long as he is liable to any doubt or fear; or that, till we have it, we ought to abstain from the Lord's Supper, or the other ordinances of God. At eight, our society met at Fetter-lane. We sat an hour without speaking. The rest of the time was spent in dispute; one having proposed a question concerning the Lord's Supper, which many warmly



affirmed none ought to receive till he had "the full assurance of faith." I observed every day more and more the advantage Satan had gained over us. Many were induced to deny the gift of God, and affirm that they never had any faith at all; and almost all these had left off the means of grace, saying they must now cease from their own works; they must now trust in Christ alone; they were poor sinners, and had nothing to do but to lie at his feet.

Again, from the same journal, in June:

I took occasion to speak of the ordinances of God, as they are means of grace. Although this expression of our Church, "means of grace," be not found in Scripture, yet, if the sense of it undeniably is, to cavil at the term is a mere strife of words. But the sense of it is undeniably found in Scripture. For God hath in Scripture ordained prayer, reading or hearing, and the receiving the Lord's Supper, as the ordinary means of conveying his grace to man. And first, prayer. For thus saith the Lord: "Ask, and it shall be given you. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." Here God plainly ordains prayer, as the means of receiving whatsoever grace we want. Here is no restriction as to believers or unbelievers; but least of all as to unbelievers, for such doubtless were most of those to whom he said, "Ask, and it shall be given you."

"Do this in remembrance of me." In the ancient Church, every one who was baptized communicated daily. So in the Acts we read, They "all continued daily in the breaking of bread, and in prayer." But in latter times, many have affirmed that the Lord's Supper is not a converting but a confirming ordinance. I showed, concerning the Holy Scriptures, that to search (that is, read and hear) them is a command of God; that this command is given to all, believers or unbelievers.

Wesley labored with them further by adducing instances of sincere seekers having been consciously pardoned—really received the atonement—in the act of receiving the Lord's Supper. Faith to lay hold of the promise was strengthened, and the inward grace came to them with the outward sign.

A hard day's work done at field-preaching, he visits them again: "Several of our brethren, of Fetter-lane, being met in the evening, Mr. S—— told them that I had been preaching up the works of the law; 'which,' added Mr. V——, 'we believers are no more bound to obey than the subjects of the King of England are bound to obey the laws of the King of France.'" No wonder Wesley exclaimed that he was "sick of such sublime divinity." After prayerful counsel the next week, he wrote down what he conceived to be the difference between them:

As to faith, you believe: 1. There are no degrees of faith; and that no man has any degree of it, before all things in him are become new, before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception that Christ dwelleth in him. 2. Accordingly, you believe there is no justifying faith, or state of justification, short of this.

Whereas I believe: 1. There are degrees of faith; and that a man may have some degree of it, before all things in him are become new, before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception that Christ dwelleth in him. 2. Accordingly, I believe there is a degree of justifying faith (and, consequently, a state of justification) short of, and commonly antecedent to, this.

As to the way of faith, you believe: That the way to attain it is to wait for Christ, and be still—that is, not to use (what we term) the means of grace; not to go to church; not to communicate; not to fast; not to use so much as private prayer; not to read the Scripture (because you believe these are not means of grace—that is, do not ordinarily convey God's grace to unbelievers; and that it is impossible for a man to use them without trusting in them); not to do temporal good; nor to attempt doing spiritual good.

Whereas I believe: The way to attain it is to wait for Christ, and be still, in using all the means of grace. Therefore I believe it right, for him who knows he has not faith (that is, that conquering faith), to go to church; to communicate; to fast; to use as much private prayer as he can; and to read the Scripture (because I believe these are 'means of grace'—that is, do ordinarily convey God's grace to unbelievers; and that it is possible for a man to use them, without trusting in them); to do all the temporal good he can; and endeavor to do spiritual good.

These business-like statements were deliberately made and considered, and the result soon followed.

"One evening [July 20]," he says, "I went to the love-feast in Fetter-lane; at the conclusion of which, having said nothing till then, I read a paper, the substance whereof was as follows:

"About nine months ago certain of you began to speak contrary to the doctrine we had till then received. The sum of what you assert is this: 1. That there is no such thing as *weak faith*; that there is no justifying faith where there is ever any doubt or fear, or where there is not, in the full sense, a new, clean heart. 2. That a man ought not to use those ordinances of God, which our Church terms "means of grace," before he has such a faith as excludes all doubt and fear, and implies a new, a clean heart.

"You have often affirmed that to search the Scriptures, to pray, or to communicate, before we have this faith, is to seek salvation by works; and that till these works are laid aside, no man can receive faith. I believe these assertions to be flatly contrary to the word of God. I have warned you hereof again and again, and besought you to turn back to the law and the testimony. I have borne with you long, hoping you would turn. But as I find you more and more confirmed in the error of your ways, nothing now remains but that I should give you up to God. You that are of the same judgment, follow me.'"

He then, without saying any thing more, withdrew, as did eighteen or nineteen of the society. "We gathered up," says Charles Wesley, "our wreck (*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*) floating here and there on the vast abyss, for nine out of ten were swallowed up in the dead sea of stillness. O why was not this done six months ago? How fatal was our delay and false moderation!"

The journal of Wednesday following says: "Our little company met at the Foundry, instead of Fetter-lane. About twenty-five of our brethren God hath given us already, all of whom think and speak the same thing; seven or eight and forty likewise, of the fifty women that were in the band, desired to cast in their lot with us." Fetter-lane became now, and continued, the head-quarters of the Brethren in London. Molther, who had put forth in revolting yet seducing manner the disturbing tenets, was withdrawn. His successors, without disavowing his teaching, pursued a conciliatory course. The opinion, perhaps, is just that the English branch of Moravianism, at this time, was not true to the original stock. Gradually a better understanding grew up, and friends at first were friends again at last. It was fortunate that the separation came when it did; otherwise, Methodism might have been entangled with, if not absorbed into, an older but feebler and less aggressive body.

At this distance it is difficult to realize how serious that trouble was. Many of the first converts of the Wesleys were in the Fetter-lane Society, and were carried away. The insidious evil was eating its way into the body. The stream was about to be corrupted at its source. It was a mighty advantage to the Wesleys, in this emergency, that they had the Foundry in their own hands. Here they lifted up the warning voice against sin, and every form of error, in the presence of people who not unfrequently crowded the place both within and without; some inquiring what they must do to be saved, and others wishful to know whether or not there were any means of grace.

That fine hymn "Long have I seemed to serve thee, Lord," was written by Charles Wesley in the midst of these disputes. It guards against both extremes, and embodies those just views on the subject which the brothers steadily maintained to the end of their lives. He used to call upon the right-minded people in his congregations at the Foundry to unite with him in singing it; and it is difficult to conceive how any enlightened Christian



could refuse to join in the holy exercise. Its effect under the circumstances must have been powerful. John Wesley's sermon on "The Means of Grace"—exhaustive and practical—was preached about this time.\*

A high authority in Wesleyan history fixes July 20, 1740, as "in strict propriety the real commencement of the Methodist Societies." Wesley, indeed, speaks of four other epochs, each of which may be regarded as a new development. The first of these was the rise of student Methodism, when, in 1729, four serious students began to meet together at Oxford. The second epoch was in April, 1736, when twenty or thirty persons began to meet in Wesley's house at Savannah. The third was May 1, 1738, when, by the advice of Peter Böhler, Wesley and other serious persons began to meet in Fetter-lane. Again: "In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to me in London, and desired that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; this was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY." Yet, even at this last-named period, Wesley was connected with the Fetter-lane Society and the Moravians; so that the Society formed by him in 1739 did not stand out as a separate and distinct religious body. But after Sunday, July 20th, 1740, all the initiatory stages of an orthodox, homogeneous, and self-governing body had been passed through, and there was (in its infancy, indeed, but having a separate existence and action) a Wesleyan Methodist Society! Not that it was known by that name—it was not; "but from that germ the Wesleyan Society has grown, and no other change has passed upon it, except from small to great, from few to many, from weak to strong, from a rudimental condition to one of full development. The Society then formed at the Foundry has remained, by a continual accession of new members, to the present time." †

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\*Sermon No. XVI. †History of Wesleyan Methodism, Geo. Smith, F.A.S.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Lay Preaching: How Begun; Its Necessity and Right—Conservatism Inwrought into Methodism—Qualification of the “Unlearned” Preacher.

NEW fields were occupied; the work enlarged; there was no retreating; but where are the preachers to come from to sustain the movement? The Lord will provide. In his absence from London, Wesley appointed a young layman—Thomas Maxfield—to hold prayer-meetings, to exhort, and give spiritual advice, as they might need it, to the people who met at the Foundry. Being fervent in spirit and mighty in the Scriptures, he greatly profited the people. They crowded to hear him, and by the increase of their number, as well as by their earnest and deep attention, they led him insensibly to go farther than he had at first designed. He began to preach, and the Lord so blessed the word that many were brought to repentance and a consciousness of pardon. The Scripture marks of true conversion evinced the work to be of God. Some were offended at this irregularity. A complaint was made to Wesley, and he hastened to London to put a stop to it. His mother then lived in his house, adjoining to the Foundry. When he arrived, she perceived that his countenance was expressive of dissatisfaction, and inquired the cause. “Thomas Maxfield,” said he abruptly, “has turned preacher, I find.” She looked attentively at him, and replied: “John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favoring readily any thing of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him also yourself.” He did so. His prejudice bowed before the force of truth, and he could only say, “It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.” Afterward, some of those young men who had thus begun to preach offered themselves to assist their father in the gospel, by preaching wherever he might appoint them. Maxfield, Richards, Westall, John Nelson, Joseph Humphries, at first, and then a host of other *itinerants*, came forward in the course of time. Wesley said, “I durst not refuse their assistance.” Lay preaching was

a part of Methodism; indeed, without it there would have been no Methodism larger and more lasting than the Religious Societies of the former century; but bringing into the field that mighty arm of gospel service was unpremeditated by Wesley. It was contrary to all his previous views, and he submitted to it as to a manifestation of the Divine will. "If he erred at all in this matter," says a high Wesleyan authority, "it was not in the way of innovation, but by an improper adherence to the practice of the Church of England in refusing to allow such men, although so clearly called of God, to administer the sacraments, because they were not episcopally ordained. Yet to this practice he did adhere, although he could not defend it on scriptural grounds."\*

It is safe to assume the reproductive power of the gospel. Wherever souls are converted under preaching, among the converts will be found some who are called of the Holy Spirit and qualified to preach. "Wesley," continues the same author, "was not embarrassed for want of fellow-laborers, by the barrenness of his converts, and the paucity of spiritual gifts among them. Seldom has the Church seen persons more richly endowed with all the qualifications essential to spiritual usefulness. He had men among his sons in the gospel qualified for every kind of ministerial duty, but nothing except a clear providential call could induce him to depart so far from the order of the Established Church as to give his sanction to the preaching of laymen in his societies."†

Lay preaching, like lay baptism, has about it the ill odor of apostolic succession. If the term be used to distinguish between persons separated to preaching and the pastoral care, and others who, while licensed to preach, follow secular pursuits, and are not amenable to the laws and usages regulating the labors of those under vows to "devote themselves wholly to God and his work"—utility may justify its employment.‡ But the term was long applied to men who were devoting themselves wholly to God and his work; who annually received appointments to pastoral care; who were models of ministerial fidelity and propriety; and whose gifts, graces, and usefulness would have adorned any age of the Church. Wesley had to move slowly. The pressure was great on both sides: on one, he was blamed for allowing lay

\* Smith's History of Wesley and his Times. † Ibid. ‡ The terms in general use among Methodists are better—*traveling* and *local* preachers.



preachers at all; on the other, for not allowing those under whose ministry congregations were gathered and edified, and souls converted, to go farther, and administer to them the sacraments as well as the word. Watson pronounces his defense of himself on the first point "irrefutable;" and it turns upon the disappointment of his hopes that the parochial clergy would take the charge of those who in different places had been brought to God by his ministry and that of his fellow-laborers. These are Wesley's words:

It pleased God, by two or three ministers of the Church of England, to call many sinners to repentance, who in several parts were undeniably turned from a course of sin to a course of holiness. The ministers of the places where this was done ought to have taken those persons who had just begun to serve God into their particular care, watching over them in tender love, lest they should fall back into the snare of the devil. And how did they watch over the sinners lately reformed? Even as a leopard watcheth over his prey. They drove some of them from the Lord's table; to which till now they had no desire to approach. They preached all manner of evil concerning them, openly cursing them in the name of the Lord. They turned many out of their work, persuaded others to do so too, and harassed them in all manner of ways. When the ministers, by whom God had helped them before, came again to those places, great part of their work was to begin again, if it could be begun again; but the relapsers were often so hardened in sin that no impression could be made upon them. What could they do in a case of so extreme necessity, where so many souls lay at stake?

"God," says Watson, "had given him large fruits of his ministry in various places. When he was absent from them, the people were 'as sheep having no shepherd,' or were rather persecuted by their natural pastors, the clergy; he was reduced, therefore, to the necessity of leaving them without religious care, or of providing it for them. He wisely chose the latter; but, true to his own principles, and even prejudices, he carried this no farther than the necessity of the case; the hours of service were in no instance to interfere with those of the Establishment, and at the parish church the members were exhorted to communicate. Mr. Wesley resisted all attempts at a formal separation, still hoping that a more friendly spirit would spring up among the clergy; and he even pressed hard upon the consciences of his people to effect their uniform and constant attendance at their parish churches and at the sacrament; but he could not long and generally succeed. The effect was, that long before his death the attendance of the Methodists at such parish churches as had not pious ministers was exceeding scanty; and as they were not

permitted public worship among themselves in the hours of Church service, a great part of the Sabbath was lost to them, except as they employed it in family and private exercises. So also as to the Lord's Supper: as it was not then administered by their own ministers, it fell into great and painful neglect."

This soon came to be, among the Methodists, the question of the day. The attempt to force them to an attendance upon the services of the Established Church, by refusing to them the sacraments from their own preachers, and by closing their chapels during the Sabbath, except early in the morning and in the evening, drove many of them into a state of actual separation both from the State Church and their own societies, and placed them in the hands of Dissenters. It required uncommon meekness for men, after hearing a sermon that railed at them and their teachers, to kneel at the chancel, with bruises on their bodies, and receive the sacrament from the hands of a clergyman who had set the mob on them. Charles Wesley did his best, especially at Bristol and London, to supply the sacrament to the Methodists; but this partial or local accommodation only made the dissatisfaction greater in other places. His High-church feelings could hardly endure the innovation of lay preaching; but the administration of the sacraments by men not episcopally ordained was quite out of the question; it would make Dissenters out of them *ipso facto*, and bring on separation! He wrote to John Nelson: "John, I love thee from my heart; yet, rather than see thee a Dissenting minister, I wish to see thee smiling in thy coffin." Whitefield, when doing his glorious work among the neglected colliers at Kingswood, complains that "while he was thus employed some of the clergy in Bristol inveighed against him from their pulpits with great vehemence, and others complained bitterly of the intolerable increase of their labor when he brought large companies of reclaimed profligates to the churches to receive the Lord's Supper." Charles Wesley had recorded under date of Oct. 13, 1740, Bristol—several years before he wrote the above to John Nelson: "I waited with my brother upon a minister, about baptizing some of his parish. He complained heavily of the multitude of our communicants, and produced the canon against strangers. He could not admit *that* as a reason for their coming to his church—that they had no sacrament at their own. I offered my assistance to lessen his *trouble*, but he

declined it. There were a hundred new communicants, he told us, last Sunday; and he added: 'I am credibly informed some of them came out of spite to me.'" Yet this good man—this primitive Methodist—was so wedded to the Established Church that unless John Nelson, and others like him, could be "episcopally ordained" he would rather see John "smiling in his coffin" than upon a presbyterial ordination administering baptism or the Lord's Supper to a Methodist congregation. How groundless and absurd the theory, popular in certain quarters, that "ambition" was at the bottom of the Methodist movement!

One is tempted to impatience at such conservatism. Providentially led, the founder of Methodism was careful not at any time to get ahead of Providence; for whoever does that will often be compelled to retrace his steps. Wesley moved slowly—perhaps it is well that he did. At this stage of the case, he writes defensively of those God had given him:

It is true that in *ordinary* cases both an *inward* and an *outward* call are requisite. But we apprehend there is something far from *ordinary* in the present case; and upon the calmest view of things we think they who are only called of God, and not of man, have *more* right to preach than they who are only called of man, and not of God. Now, that many of the clergy, though called of man, are not called of God to preach his gospel is undeniable: 1. Because they themselves utterly disclaim—nay, and ridicule—the inward call. 2. Because they do not know what the gospel is; of consequence, they *do not* and *cannot* preach it. This, at present, is my chief embarrassment. That I have not gone too far yet, I know; but whether I have gone far enough, I am extremely doubtful. I see those running whom God hath not sent; destroying their own souls and those that hear them. Unless I warn, in all ways I can, these perishing souls of their danger, am I clear of the blood of these men? (Soul-damning clergymen lay me under more difficulties than soul-saving laymen!)

But why were not soul-saving laymen "called of man" at this time, as well as of God? Why were they not then ordained to the full work of the ministry? Here we encounter the fable of apostolic succession, of which Wesley had not yet rid himself; also another difficulty, which we cannot help respecting—a regard for the order of things long established; a reluctance at innovation; a constitutional dislike of revolution. (The men who easily give up convictions, and even prejudices, on fundamental matters, and are ever ready for radical changes, are not the kind of instruments for working solid and enduring reformations.) Conservatism in revolution is a rare and valuable factor. It creates and transmits to the organization that follows the subtle



power of stability. "It is manifest that in neglect or contempt of order, Christianity could not have been handed down from age to age; but unless once and again order had given way to a higher necessity, the gospel must by this time have lain deep buried beneath the corrupt accumulations of eighteen hundred years. Yet it is a fact worthy of all regard that when Heaven sends its own chosen men to bring about needed reformatations, at the cost of a momentary anarchy, it does not give any such commission as this to those who by temper are anarchists."\*

By and by the Wesleyan organization in Europe and America was completed; but its consistency and stability and strength are largely due to cautious and slow steps. No man in England or the Colonies was bound by law or conscience to the State Church—the connection was purely voluntary. Yet, Methodists did not hastily quit it. A conservative habit; subordination to lawful power; love of order; respect for constituted authorities, so long as they can possibly serve the purpose for which they were constituted—this has been a heritage of Methodism. If the fathers were too wise and too practical to put new wine into the old bottles of succession and a national hierarchy, they first tried the old bottles to see if they would do; and after being thoroughly satisfied of their incapacity and unavailability, they laid aside the leaky leathern bags respectfully, if not regretfully.

It was well enough that the founder of Methodism labored to put the fruit of an evangelical ministry under the care of pastors already licensed, and to keep the revival inside the Church where it was needed, and in which he had been bred up and ordained; but the priests and prelates could not see the opportunity; their eyes were holden. "We will not go out," said Wesley; "if we are thrust out, well." It was well enough that he asked the Bishop of London, once and again, to ordain Methodist preachers for America—men by every token fit for the field; his lordship, by the letter of the law, held "jurisdiction" in the Colonies. He refused, and thereby deprived Methodism of all that the Established Church gained by his refusal—exactly nothing. When the time was fully come in which no question of jurisdiction could be raised, Wesley exercised the scriptural right of ordaining men for America. He respected the "jurisdiction" so long as it had any show of existence.

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\*Wesley and Methodism.

Lay preachers, so called, and their people, endured with singular patience; it was homage done to even the appearance of law and order. Their self-denial had its reward. The attestation of Heaven not only justified but demanded the measures subsequently taken. By their fruit ye shall know them. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles.

"But I am told that they are unlearned men," said the Archbishop of Armagh to Charles Wesley at the Hotwells, when objecting to lay preachers. Charles turned the point neatly, but his brother would have answered his Grace on the merits of the question. In these well-known words, John would have repelled the charge of ignorance brought against his preachers: "In one thing which they profess to know, they are *not* ignorant men. I trust there is not one of them who is not able to go through such an examination in substantial, practical, experimental divinity as few of our candidates for holy orders, even in the university—I speak it with sorrow and shame—are able to do."

Would not Thomas Walsh or Robert Strawbridge, and scores of Irish Methodist preachers, have excelled the archbishop himself in teaching the way of salvation to an average thousand of Irishmen? Stripped of the adventitious importance of his office, would not they have commanded the attention of a multitude—taking people as they are found—as well as he?

Wise master-builders are needed; but few people would dwell in houses, if none but master-builders were to help build them. Many a workman does well on the wall who has not the skill to lay off a foundation, to turn an arch, or to carry up a corner. It is as unphilosophical as unscriptural to allow no one to preach the gospel until he can properly be styled "learned." A man whose literary education falls far below that standard may nevertheless, in knowledge and experience, be sufficiently in advance of multitudes of hearers to guide and teach them in religion, to their infinite profit. Methodism is a friend of learning; it gave "the first impulse to popular education" in the last century; it encourages all ministers to reach the highest attainments in knowledge, and has always been able to show a fair proportion of men in the ranks of the "learned;" but Methodism never committed the blunder, the crime against destitute regions and perishing souls, of saying that none but "learned" men shall be allowed to preach the gospel. The Christian ministry must have

Greek and Hebrew scholars; but that all Christian ministers must be Greek and Hebrew scholars does not follow. The link connecting such a conclusion with that premise no logician ever has found or can find.

The following are the practical, scriptural tests upon which the Methodist ministry has been ordained. They were adopted at the beginning, and they are the standard now:

*Ques.* 1. How shall we try those who profess to be moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?

*Ans.* Let them be asked the following questions, namely:

1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding, a right judgment in the things of God, a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin and converted to God by their preaching?

As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved by the Holy Ghost.

It has been well remarked that "no man could give satisfactory replies to these questions unless he were truly pious and really called of God to preach his gospel." No candidate for a medical or legal diploma, no applicant for a naval or military or civil commission, can afford stronger proofs of suitable capacity for the situation he seeks, than such affirmative answers afford that a man is divinely called to the work of the ministry. Wesley did not look for precedents; he did not appeal to ecclesiastical history; he rightly judged that if a "layman" had never preached before, the layman in whom these evidences were found was entitled to belief, when he professed "to be moved by the Holy Ghost to preach."



## CHAPTER XV.

Whitefield Returns to America—Lays the First Brick of the Orphan-house—An Old Friend—Concerning the Collection—Success of his Ministry—"Poor Richard" gives the Contents of his Wallet—Separation between Wesley and Whitefield—Painful Facts—Profitable Consequences.

WHITEFIELD'S visit of nine months to England resulted in the inauguration of field-preaching and a liberal collection for the Georgia orphanage. He landed at Philadelphia in November, and sending forward his company to Savannah, he himself went "ranging."

He never preached with more power and success than during the next few months. In Philadelphia it is a small thing to say that the churches overflowed twice a day; the awakening was shown in part by "twenty-six societies for social prayer and religious conference," established in the city. He visited New York, and the word of the Lord was mighty among the people. In New Jersey his ministry was attended with great blessing. He met the Blairs, Tennents, and others, and formed a loving friendship for these evangelical men. His journal thus notices the beginnings of Princeton College (Nov. 22):

Mr. Tennent and his brethren in presbytery intend breeding up gracious youths for our Lord's vineyard. The place wherein the young men now study is a log-house, about twenty feet long, and nearly as many broad. From this despised place seven or eight worthy ministers of Jesus have been sent forth, and a foundation is now laying for the instruction of many others. The work, I am persuaded, is of God, and therefore will not come to naught.

Whitefield's tour southward was a string of appointments. Wilmington, Annapolis, and other places, heard him gladly. At one meeting-house in the woods he "observed new scenes of field-preaching"—the congregation being rated at not less than ten thousand. People came twenty miles to hear. In Virginia he met Commissary Blair at Williamsburg, and was "courteously entreated" by him and the governor; of course he preached to the *élite* of the Old Dominion at the capitol there.

William and Mary College, chartered and in part endowed by the sovereigns whose name it bears, was there. Early in the century, a commencement was held at the college. Planters came in

coaches; others in vessels from New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland—"it being a new thing in that part of America to hear graduates perform their exercises." A few miles distant was Jamestown, where the first English settlement on our Continent was made in 1607. Parish priest and prayer-book started out with the colony, and for a century and a quarter the Established Church had held sway in Virginia, sternly repressing Dissenters. As early as 1671, Gov. Berkeley wrote: "We have forty-eight parishes, and our ministers are well paid, and by my consent should be better if they would pray oftener and preach less. But of all other commodities, so of this, the worst are sent to us." Being under an episcopal regimen, with the bishop three thousand miles off, the churches showed the worst features of congregationalism, without the benefits of their own system. Ministerial discipline was out of the question, and likewise ministerial independence. The Commissary could do nothing. He was the deputy of a bishop, without the right to ordain or depose a minister. So long as the parson was not installed—and the vestry had the sole right of presentation—he was subject from year to year to be removed. The complaint was that "the ministers were 'most miserably handled by their plebeian jundos, the vestries.' The 'hiring' of parsons, as it was called, was left wholly to them. In many instances they resolved either to have no ministers at all or to reduce them to their own terms. They used them as they pleased, paid them what they pleased, and discarded them when they pleased."

The results of Whitefield's labors were appropriated and assimilated in New England and New Jersey and Pennsylvania, for there was vitality in the Congregational and Presbyterian organizations. But the effete Establishment of Virginia got little profit from the visitation: it was too busily engaged at keeping down Dissenters. What they did not gather of the great evangelist's labors fared like seed sown on the way-side.

Fredericksburg, Virginia, did not treat him well on this or a subsequent tour. Jesse Lee—of whom more hereafter—passed through Fredericksburg, about the beginning of this century:

On the 24th of March, Mr. Lee preached in this place, and was rejoiced to find the Church enjoying a season of refreshing. It was the first spiritual visitation for a long series of years; and it is mentioned in connection with the following facts: When Mr. Whitefield passed through the place, on one occasion, he attempted to preach; and either while preaching or in seeking an opportunity to do

so, he was treated with so much rudeness and incivility that, in obedience to the words of Christ, he pulled off his shoes, and shook the dust from them, as a testimony against the place. And from that solemn form of denunciation until the time of which we are writing, it is not known that a sinner was converted; and it is affirmed no revival of religion had ever blessed the place with its manifold spiritual benefits. "If," says the author, "this legend be true, the curse had worked out its consummation. The indignation was past; and God had turned from the fierceness of his anger, and now had mercy upon the people. A goodly number were gathered into the fold of Christ, a house of worship was erected, and seed was sown that is even now bringing forth fruit unto eternal life.\*

At New Berne, N. C., "his preaching was attended with uncommon influence." As he approached Charleston, "he could scarcely believe but he was amongst Londoners, both in respect of gayety of dress and politeness of manners." He arrived at Savannah January 11th. It was a melancholy thing to see the colony of Georgia reduced even to a much lower ebb than when he left it, and almost deserted by all but such as could not well go away. Employing these, therefore, he thought would be of singular service, and the money expended might be also a means of keeping them in the colony. Before his arrival, Mr. Habersham had pitched upon a plot of ground of five hundred acres for the Orphan-house, about ten miles from Savannah, and had already begun to clear and stock it. The orphans, in the meantime, were accommodated in a hired house. On the 25th of March, 1740, he laid the first brick of the house, which he called "Bethesda," *i. e.*, a house of mercy. By this time near forty children were taken in, to be provided with food and raiment; and counting the workmen and all, he had near a hundred to be daily fed. He had very little money in bank, and yet he was persuaded that the best thing he could do at present for the infant colony was to carry on the work.

Here we look around for an old friend; for when we parted with Peter Böhler he was on his way to Savannah, to preach to the Brethren and to the negroes, and—as he might be able—to the Indians. He had a very long and perilous voyage, and on his arrival in Georgia found every thing in tumult, resulting from war between England and Spain. Many of the Moravian colonists, whose fears of personal safety were not groundless, had fled to Pennsylvania; and Böhler found a mere handful of Brethren and few slaves. During the summer he was prostrated

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\* Life and Times of Rev. Jesse Lee, by L. M. Lee, D.D.



by fever, and barely recovered in time to bury the beloved Schullius Richter, his companion and first-born in the gospel. Böhler and Seiffart, with sad hearts, led the remnant of their flock, on foot, through the wilderness to Wyoming Valley, and there established the famous Moravian settlement. Under the shadow of a broad oak, on the bark of which the initials of Böhler and Seiffart were visible so late as 1799, they returned thanks, in the fine hymns of their native land, to the God of all grace for his care.\* Böhler adapted himself to his new position with his usual tact. He superintended the carpenters and wielded the ax; he handled the saw with hearty good-will; he encouraged the workmen by his counsels and example, and conducted their daily services with great unction and power. He walked also to a distant mill to procure the necessaries of life, preached with his accustomed fervor on the Sabbath, and performed all the duties of a Christian pastor with rare fidelity. The spiritual life of the community was thus sustained; and Böhler refers to the period as a season peculiarly blessed of the Lord. He was consecrated bishop at Herrnhag, in 1748; crossed the Atlantic six or eight times, serving his Church in both hemispheres—now in the universities and cities of the Old World, and now among the Indian tribes and infant settlements of the New. In 1775 he died, or entered into “the metropolis of souls,” as heaven is aptly termed in Moravian phraseology.†

Whitefield, to escape the summer heat, and to raise funds for the enterprise in hand, returned northward, preaching the gospel and, Paul-like, taking a collection. The first collection he made in America was in Charleston. He was desired by some of the inhabitants to speak in behalf of the poor orphans, and the collection amounted to £70. This was no small encouragement at that time, especially as he had reason to think it came from those who had received spiritual benefit by his ministrations. At Philadelphia he preached in the fields, and large collections were made for the Orphan-house—once, £110. Societies for praying and singing were increased, and many were concerned about their salvation. “Many negroes came,” says Whitefield, “some inquiring, Have I a soul?” He had the subtle power of interest-

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\* Life of Peter Böhler, by Lockwood.

† A worthy descendant of this excellent man—a Miss Böhler—until lately resided at Bethlehem, Pa., being connected with the Moravian Female Seminary.

ing all classes of hearers, and of chaining to his lips every ear within sound of his voice. A ship-builder was asked what he thought of him. "Think!" he replied; "I tell you, sir, every Sunday that I go to my parish church I can build a ship from stem to stern under the sermon; but were it to save my soul, under Mr. Whitefield, I could not lay a single plank." But perhaps the greatest proof of his persuasive powers was when he drew from Franklin's pocket the money which the author of "Poor Richard" had determined not to give. "I did not," says the philosopher, "approve of the Orphan-house at Savannah. Georgia was destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia, at a great expense. I thought it would have been better to have built the house at Philadelphia, and brought the children to it. This I advised, but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened, soon after, to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper; another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon," continues Franklin, "there was also one of our club who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had by precaution emptied his pockets before he came from home. Toward the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong inclination to give, and applied to a neighbor who stood near him to lend him some money for the purpose. The request was fortunately made to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was: 'At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend thee freely, but not now, for thee seems to me to be out of thy right senses.'"

About this time Whitefield sent his confidential friend and agent, Seward, over to England on important business:

To acquaint the Trustees of Georgia with the state of the colony, and the means, under God, for the better establishment thereof, it being now upheld almost wholly

by the soldiery and Orphan-house, most of the people who are unconcerned in either being gone or about to go. The proper means are principally three: 1. An allowance of negroes. 2. A free title to the lands [under the Trustee-government females could not inherit]. 3. An independent magistracy, viz., such as are able and willing to serve without fee or reward. Further, to bring over the money lodged in their [Trustees] hands for building the church at Savannah.

He kept on preaching, generally twice a day, though sometimes so overpowered by heat that he had to be lifted to his horse, riding for the next appointment. With great joy he returned to the Orphan-house, bringing, in money and provisions, more than £500. His family was now increased to one hundred and fifty, and his friends, believing the work to be of God, continued to assist him. Though he was now very weak, the cry from various quarters for more preaching, and the necessity of supplying so large a family, made him go again to Charleston, where, as well as at many other towns, the people thronged. Charleston was the place of his greatest success, and of the greatest opposition. The Commissary thundered anathemas and wrote against him, but all in vain; helping friends still more increased. His gospel-ranging was itinerancy on a large scale. He reached New England, and great was the stir; he visited Jonathan Edwards, at Northampton. At every place on the road pulpits were open, and a divine unction attended his preaching. After leaving Northampton, he preached in many towns to large and affected congregations. The good old Governor of Massachusetts carried him in his coach from place to place, and could not help following him fifty miles out of town, saying, "Thanks be to God for such refreshings on our way to heaven!" The Boston people generally received him as an angel of God. "When he preached his farewell sermon in the Common, there were twenty-three thousand at a moderate computation." Dr. Samuel Hopkins, then a student, says in his *Memoirs*: "He preached against mixed dancing and the frolicking of males and females together; which practice was then very common in New England. This offended some, especially young people. But I remember I justified him in this in my own mind and in conversation with those who were disposed to condemn him. This was in 1740, when I entered on my last year in college." December 1, he set sail for Charleston, and makes the following remark:

It is now the seventy-fifth day since I arrived in Reedy Island. My body was then weak, but the Lord has much renewed its strength. I have been enabled to



preach, I think, a hundred and seventy-five times in public, besides exhorting frequently in private. I have traveled upward of eight hundred miles, and gotten upward of £700 in goods, provisions, and money, for the Georgia orphans. Never did I perform my journeys with so little fatigue, or see such a continuance of the Divine presence in the congregations to which I have preached. "Praise the Lord, O my soul!"

After preaching at Charleston and Savannah, he arrived at Bethesda in December, and in January left for England.\*

(Hitherto the two Wesleys and Whitefield have worked together. Wesley once inquired, "Have we not leaned too much to Calvinism?" Whitefield no doubt felt that he had leaned too much to Arminianism. These tendencies must develop in all earnest and vigorous minds, until a consistent, not to say scientific, basis is reached. Each, therefore, became more pronounced. There is no half-way system. Now came what was equally painful to both parties, but inevitable—separation.) Whitefield's New England associations and reading had advanced and intensified him, and he communicated his views to friends in Old England—not without effect. The latent Calvinism and the latent Arminianism in Methodism began to strive with each other like Rebecca's twins. After the birth they were brothers still, but must live and work apart.

The first intimation of an outbreak in the London Society was on this wise: A leading member, by name Acourt, had introduced his disputed tenets, till Charles Wesley gave orders that he should no longer be admitted. John was present when next he presented himself and demanded whether they refused admitting a person only because he differed from them in opinion. Wesley answered "No," but asked what opinions he meant. He replied: "That of election. I hold that a certain number are elected from eternity, and these must and shall be saved, and the rest of mankind must and shall be damned." And he affirmed that many of the Society held the same; upon which Wesley observed that he never asked whether they did or not; "only let them not trouble others by disputing about it." Acourt replied: "Nay, but I will dispute about it." "Why then," said Wesley, "would you come among us, who you know are of another mind?" "Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you all right." "I fear," said Wesley, "your coming with this view would neither profit you nor us." "Then," replied Acourt, "I will go and

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\* *Memoirs of the Rev. Geo. Whitefield*, by Gillies.

tell all the world that you and your brother are false prophets. And I tell you in one fortnight you will all be in confusion."

John Cennick had been appointed by the Wesleys to teach the Kingswood School and, in their absence, to care for the Society at Bristol. He had developed his Calvinism and stolen away the hearts of half the people before they were aware of the mischief. "Alas!" wrote Charles to his brother, "alas! we have set the wolf to watch the sheep! God gave me great moderation toward him who for many months has been undermining our doctrine and authority." Cennick had written a letter to Whitefield, describing from his own point of view the shocking teachings of the two brothers on predestination, and concludes: "Fly, dear brother! I am alone—I am in the midst of the plague! If God give thee leave, make haste!" Of course Cennick was disconnected from the Society, and pretty soon there was a vacancy in the headship of the school; but he took a number with him.

To check the progress of what he regarded serious error, Wesley preached a sermon on "Free Grace"—text, Rom. viii. 32.\* The preacher begins by saying the grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is *free in all*, and *free for all*:

First, it is free in all to whom it is given. It does not depend on any power or merit in man; no, not in any degree, neither in whole nor in part. It does not in any wise depend either on the good works or righteousness of the receiver; not on any thing he has done, or any thing he is. It does not depend on his good tempers, or good desires, for all these flow from the free grace of God; they are the streams only, not the fountain. They are the fruits of free grace, and not the root. They are not the cause, but the effects of it. Thus is his grace free in all; that is, no way depending on any power or merit in man, but on God alone, who freely gave us his own Son, and "with him freely giveth us all things." But is it free *for* all, as well as *in* all? To this some have answered: "No, it is free only for those whom God hath ordained to life; and they are but a little flock. The greater part of mankind God hath ordained to death; and it is not free for them. Them God hateth, and therefore, before they were born, decreed they should die eternally; because so was his good pleasure, his sovereign will. Accordingly, they are born for this: to be destroyed body and soul in hell; and they grow up under the irrevocable curse of God, without any possibility of redemption."

"But," one says, "this is not the predestination which I hold—I hold only the election of grace. What I believe is no more than this: that God, before the foundation of the world, did elect a certain number of men to be justified, sanctified, and glorified. Now, all these will be saved, and none else." You do

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\* Numbered CXXIV. in Series of Sermons: preached in Bristol, 1740.

not hold any decree of reprobation; you do not think God decrees any man to be damned; you only say: "God eternally decreed that all being dead in sin, he would say to some of the dry bones, Live, and to others he would not. That consequently these should be made alive, and those abide in death; these should glorify God by their salvation, and those by their destruction." Says the preacher:

If this is what you mean "by the election of grace," I would ask one or two questions: Are any who are not thus elected saved? Is it possible any man should be saved unless he be thus elected? If you say "No," you are but where you was—you still believe that in consequence of an unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, the greater part of mankind abide in death, without any possibility of redemption; inasmuch as none can save them but God, and he will not save them. . . So, then, though you may use softer words than some, you mean the self-same thing. . . Call it therefore by whatever name you please, "election, preterition, predestination, or reprobation," it comes in the end to the same thing. The sense of all is plainly this: by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned; it being impossible that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved.

Wesley then proceeds to state the objections to such a doctrine: It renders all preaching vain; for preaching is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with it or without it, will infallibly be saved. And it is useless for them that are not elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. It takes away those first motives to follow after holiness, so frequently proposed in Scripture—the hope of future reward and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven and fear of hell. It destroys all motive to labor for the salvation of men, and all sense of responsibility for their spiritual and eternal welfare; for who can help or hinder against a fixed fate? It is full of blasphemy, he holds, since it represents our blessed Lord as a hypocrite, a man void of common sincerity:

For it cannot be denied that he everywhere speaks as if he was willing that all men should be saved. It cannot be denied that the gracious words which came out of his mouth are full of invitations to all sinners. To say, then, he did not intend to save all sinners, is to represent him as a gross deceiver. You cannot deny that he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden." If, then, you say he calls those that cannot come; those whom he knows to be unable to come; those whom he can make able to come, but will not—how is it possible to describe greater insincerity? You represent him as mocking his helpless creatures by offering what he never intends to give. You describe him as saying one thing and meaning another. . . This doctrine represents the Most Holy God



as worse than the devil—as both more false and more unjust. More *false*, because the devil, liar as he is, hath never said he willeth all men to be saved; more *unjust*, because the devil cannot, if he would, be guilty of such injustice as you ascribe to God when you say that God condemned millions of souls to everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, for continuing in sin which, for want of that grace *He will not* give them, they cannot avoid.

Having shown the logical consequences of the doctrine in many directions, but at the same time not charging these practical consequences upon those whose lives disavow them—for many there be, says the preacher, who live better than their creed—Wesley indulges in a startling apostrophe:

This is the blasphemy for which (however I love the persons who assert it) I abhor the doctrine of predestination—a doctrine upon the supposition of which, if one could possibly suppose it for a moment (call it "election," "reprobation," or what you please, for all comes to the same thing), one might say to our adversary the devil: "Thou fool, why dost thou roar about any longer? Thy lying in wait for souls is as needless and as useless as our preaching. Hearst thou not that God hath taken thy work out of thy hands; and that he doeth it much more effectually? Thou, with all thy principalities and powers, canst only so assault that we may resist thee; but he can irresistibly destroy both body and soul in hell! Thou canst only entice; but his unchangeable decree, to leave thousands of souls in death, compels them to continue in sin till they drop into everlasting burnings. Thou temptest; he forceth us to be damned, for we cannot resist his will. Thou fool, why goest thou about any longer, seeking whom thou mayest devour? Hearst thou not that God is the devouring lion, the destroyer of souls, the murderer of men?"

Wesley's sermon entitled "Free Grace" was printed as a 12mo pamphlet in twenty-four pages. Annexed to it was Charles Wesley's "Hymn on Universal Redemption," consisting of thirty-six stanzas, of which these two are specimens:

A power to choose, a will t' obey,  
Freely his grace *restores*;  
We all *may* find the living way,  
And call the Saviour ours.  
  
Thou canst not mock the sons of men,  
Invite us to draw nigh,  
Offer thy grace to all, and then—  
Thy grace to most deny!

Copies of the sermon reached America, and Whitefield, with the assistance of New England friends, prepared a reply, which was published in Boston and in Charleston, and in London upon his arrival there. Wesley made only one objection to it. Whitefield not only tries to refute his teaching, but unnecessarily

makes a personal attack on Wesley's character, for which, the next year, he humbly begged his pardon.\* Wesley believed and preached general redemption, but raised no objection to Whitefield's believing and preaching election and final perseverance. His friends wished him to reply to Whitefield's pamphlet. He answered: "You may read Whitefield against Wesley, but you shall never read Wesley against Whitefield."

In a letter to his alienated friend, Wesley says: "These things ought not to be. It lay in your power to have prevented all, and yet to have borne testimony to what you call 'the truth.' If you had disliked my sermon, you might have printed another on the same text, and have answered my proofs, without mentioning my name; this had been fair and friendly."

Whitefield writes: "It would have melted any heart to have heard Mr. Charles Wesley and me weeping, after prayer, that if possible the breach might be prevented." Yet he could not help chiding "brother Charles" for aiding with his poetry that sermon in favor of the heresy of *universal redemption*. So soon did the powerful and persuasive verse of the poet of Methodism join with the logic of his brother in spreading the Bible truth that God, through the atonement of the Son and the influence of the Spirit, makes a *bona fide* offer of salvation to every one of the fallen race, and if any man is lost it must be by his own fault.

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast;  
Let every soul be Jesus' guest:  
Ye need not one be left behind,  
For God hath bidden all mankind.

Preventing grace is given every one who will use it, to enable him to accept and comply with the terms of salvation—repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Universal redemption, therefore, does not imply universal salvation. (In their free agency men may refuse life.) To Whitefield it seemed that the doctrine of universal redemption, as set forth by Wesley, "is really the highest reproach upon the dignity of the Son of God, and the merit of his blood." He could not understand how any could perish for whom Christ died, for "how," he asks, "can all be universally redeemed, if all are not finally saved."

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\* Whitefield alluded to Wesley's drawing a lot on a certain occasion, and in such terms as to give rise, by the exaggeration of his enemies, to the monstrous falsehood that Wesley had tossed up a shilling to determine the great question whether he should believe and preach and print Calvinism or Arminianism.

"Dear sir," he writes to Wesley, "for Jesus Christ's sake, consider how you dishonor God by denying election. You plainly make man's salvation depend not on God's *free grace*, but on man's *free will*. Dear, dear sir, give yourself to reading. Study the covenant of grace. Down with your carnal reasoning;" and then he prophesies Wesley "will print another sermon the reverse of this, and entitle it '*Free Grace Indeed*'—free, because not free to all; but free, because God may withhold it or give it to whom and when he pleases."

Howell Harris, that eminent lay preacher, who with Whitefield had awakened and evangelized Wales, and who was greatly esteemed and beloved by all Methodists, took up the question and wrote to Wesley, telling him that preaching electing love brings glory to God and benefit and consolation to the soul. He adds: "O when will the time come when we shall all agree? Till then, may the Lord enable us to bear with one another!"

Whitefield wrote from Bethesda to Wesley:

O that God may give you a sight of his free, sovereign, and electing love! But no more of this. Why will you compel me to write thus? Why will you dispute? I am willing to go with you to prison, and to death; but I am not willing to oppose you. Dear, dear sir, study the covenant of grace, that you may be consistent with yourself. Besides, dear sir, what a fond conceit is it to cry up perfection, and yet cry down the doctrine of final perseverance? But this and many other absurdities you will run into, because you will not own election; and you will not own election because you cannot own it without believing the doctrine of reprobation. What, then, is there in reprobation so horrid?

And yet later: "O that there may be harmony, and very intimate union between us! Yet, it cannot be, since you hold *universal redemption*. The devil rages in London. He begins now to triumph indeed. The children of God are disunited among themselves. My dear brother, for Christ's sake avoid all disputation. Do not oblige me to preach against you; I had rather die."

Again, from Charleston:

MY DEAR AND HONORED SIR: Give me leave, with all humility, to exhort you not to be strenuous in opposing the doctrines of election and final perseverance. . . . Perhaps the doctrines of election and of final perseverance have been abused; but, notwithstanding, they are children's bread, and ought not to be withheld from them, supposing they are always mentioned with proper cautions against the abuse of them. I write not this to enter into disputation. I cannot bear the thought of opposing you. . . . Alas! I never read any thing that Calvin wrote. My doctrines I had from Christ and his apostles. I was taught them of God; and as God was pleased to send me out first, and to enlighten me first, so, I think, he still continues to do it.



They were both equally conscientious, if not equally logical. Whitefield wrote his "Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, in answer to his sermon entitled 'Free Grace,'" with the motto attached, "When Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."

The "letter" is dated "Bethesda, in Georgia, December 24, 1740." He reiterates his reluctance to write against Wesley, protesting that Jonah could not go with more reluctance against Nineveh. "Were nature to speak," said he, "I had rather die than do it; and yet if I am faithful to God, and to my own and others' souls, I must not stand neuter any longer." On his return to England in March, 1741, Wesley called on him, and says of the interview: "He told me he and I preached two different gospels; and therefore he not only would not join with or give me the right-hand of fellowship, but was resolved to preach publicly against me and my brother, wheresoever he preached at all." This threat was carried into effect. Soon the Tabernacle was built, not far away from the Foundry, and there Whitefield, with Cennick, Howell Harris, and others, good men and holy, preached Calvinistic Methodism. David and Jonathan are divided. Wesley writes: "Those who believed universal redemption had no desire to separate; but those who held particular redemption would not hear of any accommodation, being determined to have no fellowship with men that were 'in such dangerous errors.' So there were now two sorts of Methodists—those for particular and those for general redemption." And this comforting philosophy he bases on the unwelcome fact:

The case is quite plain. There are bigots both for predestination and against it. God is sending a message to those on either side. But neither will receive it, unless from one who is of their own opinion. Therefore, for a time, you are suffered to be of one opinion, and I of another. But when his time is come, God will do what man cannot, namely, make us both of one mind.

Emissaries of Satan were not wanting to make the most of the breach. Wesley's journal gives an incident:

A private letter written to me by Mr. Whitefield having been printed without either his leave or mine, great numbers of copies were given to our people, both at the door and in the Foundry itself. Having procured one of them, I related (after preaching) the naked fact to the congregation, and told them: "I will do just what I believe Mr. Whitefield would were he here himself." Upon which I tore it in pieces before them all. Every one who had received it did the same. So that in two minutes there was not a copy left. Ah! poor Ahithophel! *Ibi omnis effusus labor!* (So all the labor's lost!)

The small men and the go-betweens were very bitter; tongues and pens were busy, and the prophets of evil saw Methodism coming speedily to naught. But the leaders loved and esteemed each other, and soon came to friendly interviews. Whitefield preached in the Foundry and Wesley in the Tabernacle, and, as the latter said, "another stumbling-block was taken out of the way." Good feeling was fully restored, and while each retained his opinions to the last, they agreed to disagree. When Whitefield died in America, and his will was opened in London, the last item in it was found to be: "N. B.—I also leave a mourning-ring to my honored and dear friends and disinterested fellow-laborers, the Revs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them in heart and Christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine."

And while the trustees of the Tabernacle were arranging for the funeral, his chief executor came forward and informed them that he had many times said to Whitefield: "If you should die abroad, whom shall we get to preach your funeral-sermon? Must it be your old friend, the Rev. John Wesley?" And his answer constantly was, "He is the man."

The chief agents of the Methodist Revival are parted for a season; each influencing a class not affected by the other. The living stream is divided: one branch, after refreshing and enriching a dry and thirsty land, is absorbed and lost; the other, with well-defined and widening banks and deepening current, flows on.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Christian Fellowship Provided for—Bands, Love-feasts, Class-meetings—Origin of these Means of Grace—The Work Extends—Epworth—Wesley Preaches on his Father's Tombstone; Buries his Mother—Newcastle—Cornwall—Discipline—First Annual Conference—The Organization Complete.

CHRISTIAN fellowship is a leading feature of Methodist economy.<sup>1</sup> It was early provided for in the band-meeting and the love-feast, where mutual edification is the object, and personal experience the subject of discourse. The poet of Methodism was felicitous and fruitful in hymns for social worship. Of the proportionally large number on the "Communion of Saints" in Methodist hymn-books, Charles Wesley is the author of more than three-fourths. "The gift which He on one bestows" is thus participated in by all.

The love-feast was taken, with little modification, from the Moravians, who had it from the agape of the Primitive Church.<sup>2</sup> Christians meet apart at stated times, and after eating the simplest meal together in token of good-will, light and love are promoted by conversation on the things of God, specially as related to personal experience. Bands also were introduced from the same quarter, and passed over into Methodism. This institute provided for a close fellowship. It required a subdivision into small and select numbers. The band-meetings were always voluntary, and never a test of Society-membership. "Two, three, or four true believers, who have full confidence in each other, form a band. Only it is to be observed that in one of these bands all must be men or all women, and all married or all single." \* The design is to obey that command of God by St. James: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed." In the rules laid down very searching inquiries were allowed to be made of each other by the members, and very free disclosures of the interior life, as to temptations and deliv-

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\* Rules of the Band Societies, drawn up for Methodist Societies, Dec. 25, 1738. The Band Rules were continued in the Methodist Discipline in America till the year 1854, when they were eliminated by the General Conference of the M. E. Church, South. The General Conference of the (Northern) M. E. Church canceled them in 1856.



erances. Much cavil has been indulged in, by ignorant friends and critical enemies, against the bands; but in vain has it been attempted to find in them either the principle or the evil of the Romish Confessional. Richard Watson thus replies to certain objectors within the pale of the Established Church in his time:

Whatever objection may be made to these meetings, as a formal part of discipline (though with us they are only recommended, not enjoined), the principle of them is to be found in this passage of Scripture. They have been compared to the auricular confession of the papists, but ignorantly enough, for the confession is in itself essentially different, and it is not made to a minister, but takes place among private Christians to each other, and is, in fact, nothing more than a general declaration of the religious experience of the week. Nor is the abuse of the passage in St. James to the purpose of superstition a reason sufficient for neglecting that friendly confession of faults by Christians to each other which may engage their prayers in each other's behalf. The founders of the national Church did not come to this sweeping conclusion, notwithstanding all their zeal against the confession of the Romish Church. In the Homily on Repentance it is said: "We ought to confess our weakness and infirmities one to another, to the end that, knowing each other's frailness, we may the more earnestly pray together unto Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, that he will vouchsafe to pardon us our infirmities, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake."

The class-meeting came later, and is a distinctive outgrowth of Methodism. This means of grace connected pastoral oversight with Christian fellowship; it came when it was needed, providentially. Wesley's itinerancy had begun. How could he watch over so many souls? In London, as early as 1741, there were over a thousand in the Society. The class-meeting is so important that Wesley's own account of it is here given:

But as much as we endeavored to watch over each other, we soon found some who did not live in the gospel. I do not know that any hypocrites were crept in, for indeed there was no temptation; but several grew cold, and gave way to the sins which had long easily beset them. We quickly perceived there were many ill consequences of suffering these to remain among us. It was dangerous to others, inasmuch as all sin is of an infectious nature. It brought such a scandal on their brethren as exposed them to what was not properly the reproach of Christ. It laid a stumbling-block in the way of others, and caused the truth to be evil spoken of. We groaned under these inconveniences long, before a remedy could be found. The people were scattered so wide in all parts of the town, from Wapping to Westminster, that I could not easily see what the behavior of each person in his own neighborhood was; so that several disorderly walkers did much hurt before I was apprised of it. At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol (Feb. 15th, 1742) concerning the means of paying the debts there, when one stood up and said: "Let

every member of the Society give a penny a week, till all are paid." Another answered: "But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it." "Then," said he, "put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself; and each of you call on eleven of your neighbors weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting." It was done. In awhile some of these informed me they found such and such a one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately, "This is the thing, the very thing we have wanted so long." I called together all the leaders of the classes (so we used to term them and their companies), and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behavior of those whom he saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their ways, and some were put away from us.

As this took up a great deal of the leader's time, and he had seldom a suitable place to converse with the members personally, it was soon resolved that the class meet in one place at a given time, beginning and closing with song and prayer. This practice became general, and gave efficiency and organization to the Wesleyan Societies. The leaders then met Wesley or his assistant at another time every week to report any cases of sickness or disorderly conduct, and to pay the steward of the Society the sum which had been received of the class.

Thus class-meetings began. Wesley writes: "It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped by this little prudential regulation. Many now experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burdens, and naturally to care for each other's welfare. And as they had daily a more intimate acquaintance, so they had a more endeared affection for each other. Upon reflection, I could not but observe, This is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity." The class-meeting was thus endowed with a pastoral, financial, and devotional function. Long after "a penny a week and a shilling a quarter" fell into disuse by the adoption of larger financial schemes among wealthier people, the inquiry how their souls prospered, and giving suitable advice in every case, remained the chief business of the class-leader. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." Jesus is entitled to the praise, and every member to the benefit, of a work of grace in any soul. (The class-meeting not only strengthened the weak, it confirmed the strong, and trained and developed laborers for wider fields.) At the first, Societies were of a general character; but at the opening of the Foundry, the distinct Methodist United Society (1739)

was instituted; and this form of organization spread to Bristol and elsewhere. The class-meeting began in Bristol (1742); and this closer organization soon obtained among the Societies at London and elsewhere. All organizations must have rules, and the Rules of the United Societies were framed and published at Newcastle (1743), and governed all. By and by society and class became synonymous terms, where one class included all the Society at a place. Some of the old members were at first averse to this new arrangement, regarding it not as a privilege but rather as a restraint. They objected that there were no such meetings when they joined the Society, and asked why they should be instituted now. Wesley answered that he regarded class-meetings not essential, nor of Divine institution, but merely prudential helps, which it was a pity the Society had not been favored with from the beginning. "We are always open to instruction," he said to these complainants, "willing to be wiser every day than we were before, and to change whatever we can change for the better."

(The class-meeting has been the germ of thousands of Methodist churches.) When, under the word, souls have been awakened in any place, or when, by immigration, a few Christians are thrown together, a class is formed. The pastor appoints the leader, who is in the pastor's stead during his absence. The organization is simple and effective, at once bringing into play all necessary machinery. Weekly meetings and the fellowship that is involved are most helpful to those, in any state of knowledge or grace, who are trying to work out their salvation. The apostolic injunction of "assembling ourselves together" is fulfilled. Prayer-meetings and preaching and the sacraments follow, and the work expands indefinitely.

"Form Societies in every place where we preach," was Wesley's motto. Where this had not been done, his remark was: "All the seed has fallen by the way-side; there is scarce any fruit remaining." The first Societies passed readily into these classes, and thus was formed the primary and compact organism.

About this time Whitefield wrote to Wesley: "My attachment to America will not permit me to abide very long in England; consequently, I should but weave a Penelope's web if I formed Societies; and if I should form them, I have not proper assistants to take care of them. I intend therefore to go about preach-



ing the gospel to every creature. You, I suppose, are for settling Societies everywhere." Dr. Adam Clarke says:

It was by this means (the formation of Societies) that we have been enabled to establish permanent and holy churches over the world. Mr. Wesley saw the necessity of this from the beginning. Mr. Whitefield, when he separated from Mr. Wesley, did not follow it. What was the consequence? The fruit of Mr. Whitefield's labors died with himself; Mr. Wesley's fruit remains, grows, increases, and multiplies exceedingly. Did Mr. Whitefield see his error? He did, but not till it was too late. His people, long unused to it, would not come under this discipline. Have I authority to say so? I have, and you shall have it. Forty years ago I traveled in Bradford, the Wilts Circuit, with Mr. John Pool. Himself told me the following anecdote: Mr. Pool was well known to Mr. Whitefield, and having met him one day, Whitefield accosted him in the following manner: "Well, John, art thou still a Wesleyan?" Pool replied: "Yes, sir; and I thank God that I have the privilege of being in connection with him, and one of his preachers." "John," said Whitefield, "thou art in thy right place. My Brother Wesley acted wisely—the souls that were awakened under his ministry he joined in class, and thus preserved the fruits of his labor. This I neglected, and my people are a rope of sand."

The watch-night dates back to 1740. The Kingswood colliers had been used to "watch the old year out" with riot and revelries, and now that a reformation had taken place in them, this their custom was reformed also. It was suggested by James Rogers, a collier noted among his neighbors for playing on the violin, but who, being awakened under the ministry of Charles Wesley, went home, burned his fiddle, and told his wife that he meant to be a Methodist. He became a faithful lay preacher. The people met at half-past eight; the house was filled from end to end; and "we concluded the year," says Wesley, "wrestling with God in prayer, and praising him for the wonderful work which he had already wrought upon the earth." The meeting soon became a favorite one, and was held monthly. Wesley writes: "Some advised me to put an end to this; but upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it; rather, I believed it might be made of more general use. The Church, in ancient times, was accustomed to spend whole nights in prayer, which nights were termed *vigilæ*, or vigils." Always watchful to promote the spiritual prosperity of his people, Wesley at a later day introduced into his Societies the practice of renewing the covenant on the first Sunday of every year. In many places the renewal of the covenant closes the watch-night service.

During the next two years Wesley traversed many parts of the kingdom, preaching almost daily, and sometimes four sermons on the Sabbath. Helpers were raised up, and with this assistance he was able to maintain regular worship in connection with his various Societies, and at the same time to extend the work into new districts. While he was passing and repassing between London and Bristol, with continual deviations to Southampton, Leicester, Nottingham, Bath, and Wales, Charles Wesley was scarcely less active. It required the utmost efforts of the brothers to guard their people against Moravian stillness and Antinomianism on the one hand, and Whitefield's doctrine of predestination on the other. By 1742 Wesley had not only formed numerous Societies, but saw more fruit of his labors rising up around him as able assistants. Twenty-three preachers were, during this year, regularly engaged as helpers, besides many local preachers. Ingham and the Delamottes, meantime, had been won over to "Moravian mysticism;" and it required all, and more than all, John Nelson could do in Yorkshire to keep the "German boar of stillness" from laying waste the vineyard in those parts.

In May Wesley invaded the north. The power of the gospel as exhibited at Kingswood was equal to the wants of Newcastle. The opening of his mission at this point, where one of his strongest churches was planted and an important center of operations established, deserves notice. The account exhibits all the elements of the successful evangelist. His journal (1742) says:

We came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne about six, and, after a short refreshment, walked into the town. I was surprised; so much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing (even from the mouths of little children) do I never remember to have seen and heard before, in so small a compass of time. Surely this place is ripe for Him who "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." At seven next [Sunday] morning I walked down to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town, and, standing at the end of the street with John Taylor, began to sing the hundredth Psalm. Three or four people came out to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose there might be twelve or fifteen hundred, before I had done preaching; to whom I applied those solemn words: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Observing the people, when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me, with the most profound astonishment, I told them: "If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again." At five, the hill on which I designed to preach was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together either in Moorfields or at Kennington Common.

On his way southward the next month, Wesley passed through Epworth—his first visit for many years. Beginning on Sunday, he spent a few days in the neighborhood, preaching daily with uncommon tenderness and power. We quote from his journal:

A little before the service began [Sunday] I went to Mr. Romley, the curate, and offered to assist him either by preaching or reading prayers. But he did not care to accept of my assistance. The church was exceeding full in the afternoon, a rumor being spread that I was to preach. After sermon John Taylor stood in the church-yard, and gave notice, as the people were coming out: "Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, designs to preach here at six o'clock." Accordingly at six I came, and found such a congregation as I believe Epworth never saw before. I stood near the east end of the church, upon my father's tomb-stone, and cried: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

He returned to the same pulpit on Friday, and during the sermon "lamentation and great mourning were heard; God bowing the hearts of the people, so that on every side, as with one accord, they lifted up their voice and wept aloud."

Wesley tells of the next day: "I preached on the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith. While I was speaking, several dropped down as dead; and among the rest, such a cry was heard, of sinners groaning for the righteousness of faith, as almost drowned my voice. But many of these soon lifted up their heads with joy, and broke out into thanksgiving; being assured they now had the desire of their soul—the forgiveness of their sins. I observed a gentleman there who was remarkable for not pretending to be of any religion at all. I was informed he had not been at public worship of any kind for upward of thirty years. Seeing him stand as motionless as a statue, I asked him abruptly, 'Sir, are you a sinner?' He replied, with a deep and broken voice, 'Sinner enough;' and continued staring upward till his wife and a servant or two, who were all in tears, put him into his chaise and carried him home."

And he wound up the protracted meeting on Sunday evening: "At six I preached for the last time in Epworth church-yard (being to leave the town the next morning), to a vast multitude gathered together from all parts, on the beginning of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. I continued among them for near three hours; and yet we scarce knew how to part. I am well assured," writes Wesley, "that I did far more good to my Lincolnshire



parishioners by preaching three days on my father's tomb than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit."

All this was good news for his mother, then at his house and awaiting her "release," which occurred the following month. Standing by her open grave (in Bunhill Fields, opposite City Road Chapel), he preached her funeral-sermon from the text: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; . . . and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." He says: "Almost an innumerable company of people being gathered together, about five in the afternoon, I committed to the earth the body of my mother, to sleep with her fathers. It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see on this side eternity."

Fierce persecutions occur about this time. The clergy stir up the people from their pulpits, and the houses of Methodists are mobbed, and their chapels torn down. Wesley, attending a church-service one Sunday in Staffordshire, makes this report:

On Sunday the scene began to open; I think I never heard so wicked a sermon, and delivered with such bitterness of voice and manner, as that which Mr. E——n preached in the afternoon. I knew what effect this must have in a little time; and therefore judged it expedient to prepare the poor people for what was to follow, that when it came they might not be offended. Accordingly, I strongly enforced these words of our Lord: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, . . . yea, and his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

In a few days the Wednesbury mob took Wesley out of the house he was preaching in, carried him round and about for several hours with many threats of violence, but were strangely withheld, and returned him, at ten o'clock at night, to the place they took him from, as he says with no worse damage than a bruised hand and the loss of "one flap of his waistcoat." His brother met him soon after. "He looked," said Charles, "like a soldier of Christ; his clothes were torn to tatters;" a proof that Wesley's account of the loss of one flap of his waistcoat is a modest statement. Their temper of mind is exhibited in a hymn written by Charles Wesley after one of these tumults:

Worship, and thanks, and blessing,  
And strength ascribe to Jesus!  
Jesus alone defends his own,  
When earth and hell oppress us.

The hymn for opening an Annual Conference, composed afterward by Charles Wesley for that purpose, and sung on the first day wherever Conferences of itinerant preachers are held, shows the circumstances in which it had its origin and inspiration:

And are we yet alive,  
And see each other's face?  
Glory and praise to Jesus give  
For his redeeming grace!

What troubles have we seen,  
What conflicts have we passed,  
Fightings without, and fears within,  
Since we assembled last!

Charles visited Cornwall, the chapel at St. Ives at that time being the head-quarters of Methodism in the west. Here, as in Wednesbury, he found the clergy using their utmost efforts to stir up the people against the new sect. The consequence was a series of disgraceful riots, dangerous to the lives of the Methodists and their ministers, and destructive of their property. During those seasons of violence the "preaching-house" at St. Ives was gutted and the benches and furniture destroyed, the preacher and congregation being savagely assaulted. The church-warden at Pool, heading a mob, drove the preacher and congregation to the border of the parish; then, leaving them there, he returned and rewarded his followers with drink in the ale-house at Pool, in consequence of which the following entry may now be found in the parish book: "Expenses at Ann Gartrell's on driving the Methodists, nine shillings."\*

How the Methodists moved on a place, when they meant to take it, is illustrated by the manner in which Cornwall was subdued to Christ. Charles Wesley remained preaching in every part of the mining region with great success, notwithstanding furious persecution, until the first week in August (1743), when he returned to London. In less than a month his brother arrived at St. Ives. On this occasion John Nelson accompanied Wesley; his journal, therefore, affords information. Nelson set out from London for this journey in company with another preacher; they had but one horse between the two, and came through Oxford, and preached in the towns by the way. After preaching at Bristol and Bath, Nelson and Downes proceeded toward Cornwall with Wesley,

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\* History of Wesleyan Methodism, by Geo. Smith, F.A.S.

who was accompanied by Mr. Shepherd, who had been preaching in that quarter. They appear to have had a horse each; for Nelson says, "We generally set out before Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shepherd." Having reached St. Ives, Wesley's first care here, as in other places, was to make a thorough examination of the classes. He found about one hundred and twenty members; and near a hundred of these enjoyed peace with God

So soon as they were fairly at their journey's end, John Nelson went to work at his trade as a mason; and not long after, Downes, being taken ill of fever, was for a time laid aside. Wesley and Shepherd immediately began to preach, and were joined in these labors by Nelson in the evenings. These laborers in a short time spread the gospel most abundantly over the narrow peninsula of West Cornwall.

What they endured in the prosecution of their mission may be seen from Nelson's journal. As soon as he had finished his job of work, he also fully devoted himself to preaching; and of this period he says: "All this time Mr. Wesley and I lay on the floor; he had my greatcoat for his pillow, and I had Burkitt's 'Notes on the New Testament' for mine. After being here near three weeks, one morning about three o'clock, Mr. Wesley turned over, and, finding me awake, clapped me on the side, saying: 'Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer; I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but on one side.'" Nelson continues: "We usually preached on the commons, going from one common to another, and it was but seldom any one asked us to eat or drink. One day we had been at St. Hilary Downs, and Mr. Wesley had preached from Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, and there was a shaking among the people as he preached. As we returned, Mr. Wesley stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying: 'Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries; for this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst that ever I saw for getting food. Do the people think we can live by preaching?'" Wesley says that the last morning of his stay he was waked between three and four by a company of miners, who, fearing they should be too late for the five o'clock preaching, had gathered around the house, and were singing hymns.

Fidelity and closeness of pastoral oversight was a feature of Wesleyan polity, as appears by very many journalized visitations.



Take these from the latter end of 1743.—At Bristol, Wesley prosecuted a careful inquiry into the state of the Society by speaking with every member individually, and rejoiced to find them neither “barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “On the following days,” he says, “I spoke with each member of the Society in Kingswood. I cannot understand how any minister can hope ever to give up his account with joy, unless (as Ignatius advises) he ‘knows all his flock by name, not overlooking the men-servants and maid-servants.’” About the end of the month he went to London, where, assisted by his brother, he made a similar visitation of the London Society; at the close of it he preached a sermon, and made a collection of £50 toward the expense of building the chapel at Newcastle. In 1745 he carefully examined the Society in London one by one, and wrote a list of the whole with his own hand, numbered from one to two thousand and eight. In 1746 he repeated this operation, and wrote another list, in which the number was reduced to one thousand nine hundred and thirty-nine.

Northward he moves early in 1744. Arrived in Newcastle, between three and four hundred miles from Bristol, after preaching in the town and in adjacent places, he read the rules to the Society, and commenced a careful examination of the roll. He was particular in this inquiry because of the great revival which had taken place a few months before. The result was that seventy-six had left the Society, and sixty-four were expelled. Coming to particulars concerning those expelled, we get an insight into the moral code, as well as discipline of those days. His journal tells us: “Two for cursing and swearing; two for habitual Sabbath-breaking; seventeen for drunkenness; two for retailing spirituous liquors; three for quarreling and brawling; three for habitual, willful lying; four for railing and evil-speaking,” etc.

What of those withdrawn? Wesley accounts for them, too, in his journal:

I observed the number of those who had left the Society, since December, was seventy-six; fourteen of these (chiefly Dissenters) said they left it because otherwise their ministers would not give them the sacrament; nine more, because their husbands or wives were not willing they should stay in it; twelve, because their parents were not willing; five, because their master and mistress would not let them come; seven, because their acquaintance persuaded them to leave it; five, because people said such bad things of the Society; nine, because they would not

he laughed at; three, because they would not lose the poor's allowance; three more, because they could not spare time to come; two, because it was too far off; one, because she was afraid of falling into fits; one, because people were so rude in the street; two, because Thomas N—— was in the Society; one, because he would not turn his back on his baptism; one, because we were mere Church of England men; and one, because it was time enough to serve God yet.

On his return to London he raised £60, to alleviate the sufferings of the persecuted Methodists in Staffordshire, whose houses could be known, as one rode along the street, by the broken doors and windows, and by other signs of violence. He visited Cornwall later in the spring. At St. Ives the preaching-house was demolished. The people had been excited to such frenzy against the Methodists that on hearing that the British Admiral Matthews had beat the Spaniards, they manifested their joy by tearing down the Methodist chapel. (But at last the cause triumphed gloriously in Cornwall.)

It is time for another forward step — the first Annual Conference. (Wesley had been pursuing his itinerant course about five years.) He had in connection with him as fellow-laborers forty-five preachers, including half a dozen ministers of the Establishment who coöperated with him. This number is exclusive of the local preachers throughout the country, of whom there was a considerable number. Societies had been formed in many of the principal towns from Land's End to Newcastle. The number of members is not known. There were nearly three thousand in London, and the aggregate number throughout the country must have been several thousand. The first Conference was a meeting of his "helpers," or lay assistants, and the pious clergymen who had sympathized with them. He requested the attendance of these persons, and has left on record his object for doing so:

In 1744 I wrote to several clergymen, and to all who then served me as sons in the gospel, desiring them to meet me in London, and to give me their advice concerning the best method of carrying on the work of God.

(This original Conference was held at the Foundry, and began June 25th.) There were present John Wesley, Charles Wesley; John Hodges, rector of Wenvo; Henry Piers, vicar of Bexley; Samuel Taylor, vicar of Quinton; and John Meriton, a clergyman from the Isle of Man. Thomas Richards, Thomas Maxfield, John Bennett, and John Downes were the helpers, or lay preachers, present.

On the day before the Conference commenced, besides the ordinary preaching services, a love-feast was held; and during the day the Lord's Supper was administered to the whole London Society, now numbering between two and three thousand members. The sessions were held by adjournment from Monday, June 25th, till the end of the week. Great precaution was taken by Wesley in enacting suitable rules for the discussions of the Conference. It was decided "to check no one, either by word or look, even though he should say what is quite wrong; to beware of making haste, or of showing or indulging any impatience, whether of delay or contradiction;" that "every question proposed be fully debated, and 'bolted to the bran.'"

Preliminaries having been arranged, and earnest prayer offered, the design of the meeting was proposed under three heads, namely: To "consider, 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. 3. What to do; that is, how to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice." Under the first head, a conversation was continued throughout this and the following day, which embraced the leading doctrines of the gospel, such as justification, saving faith, imputed righteousness, sanctification, etc.:

We began by considering the doctrine of justification; the questions relating to which, with the substance of the answers given thereto, were as follows: Q. What is it to be justified? A. To be pardoned, and received into God's favor, into such a state that if we continue therein we shall be finally saved. Q. Is faith the condition of justification? A. Yes; for every one who believeth not is condemned, and every one who believes is justified. Q. But must not repentance, and works meet for repentance, go before this faith? A. Without doubt, if by repentance you mean conviction of sin, and by works meet for repentance, obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, leaving off evil, doing good, and using his ordinances according to the power we have received. Q. What is faith? A. First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost—"Christ loved me, and gave himself for me." This is that faith by which he is justified, or pardoned, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same Spirit bears witness, "Thou art pardoned, thou hast redemption in his blood." And this is saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart. Q. What sins are consistent with justifying faith? A. No *willful* sin. If a believer *willfully* sins, he casts away his faith. Neither is it possible he should have *justifying faith again* without previously *repenting*. Q. Must every believer come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness? A. It is certain a believer *need* never again come into condemnation. It seems he need not come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness; and that (ordinarily, at least) he *will not*, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness. Yet it is true that the first joy does seldom last long; that it is commonly followed by doubts and fears; and that God frequently permits great heaviness before any large manifestation of himself. Q. Are works necessary to the continuance of faith? A. Without doubt; for a man



may forfeit the free gift of God, either by sins of omission or commission. Q. Can faith be lost but for the want of works? A. It cannot but through disobedience. Q. How is faith made *perfect by works*? A. The more we exert our faith, the more it is increased. To him that hath shall be given.

Then they took up discipline. The General Rules\* were read, and by the time adjournment was reached they not only understood each other, but were of one mind and heart. The spirit and substance of the compact made between the founder of Methodism and his preachers are contained in the Rule of Enlistment into the heroic order of itinerants, adopted at this first Conference:

Act in all things not according to your own will, but *as a son in the gospel*. As such it is your part to employ your time in that manner that we direct; partly in visiting the flock from house to house (the sick in particular); partly in such a course of reading, meditation, and prayer as we advise from time to time. Above all, if you labor with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do that part of the work which we direct at those times and places which we judge most for his glory.†

The proceedings indicate that Methodism began not in a theoretical but in an experimental faith; and this was made the basis of the plan of operations. Religion itself was the inspiring spirit of order. The inward and divine life created the external economy, and not the economy the life. Experimental piety was the first in order, and discipline the second. Five days thus spent must have had a happy effect on the minds of such men. Wesley said of them: "They desire nothing but to save their own souls, and those that hear them."

The next Conference met at Bristol, with fewer "clergy" and more "preachers." "We had our second Conference," says Wesley, "with as many of the brethren who labor in the word as could be present." On this occasion the theological doctrines mooted at the first Conference were carefully reviewed; the opinions then given, and the forms of expression in which they were conveyed, were now very carefully scrutinized, and in some cases modified. The fidelity of the preachers also, in respect of the

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\* "The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies, in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Price one penny." 12 pages. This, the first edition of the "Rules," is signed by John Wesley only, and bears date of February 23, 1743. A second edition was issued, signed by both John and Charles Wesley, dated May 1, 1743. (Tyerman.)

† This has been called *sacramentum itinerarium*, and is the same now as then.

rules that had been laid down, was considered, and suitable admonitions were administered. In regard to the suggestion that the Methodists might ultimately become a distinct sect, when their clerical leaders were no more, these servants of God declare: "We cannot with a safe conscience neglect the present opportunity of saving souls while we live, for fear of consequences which may possibly or probably happen after we are dead;" assuming that the salvation of souls is of greater importance than the maintenance of any system of ecclesiastical order whatever.

At the third Conference (1746) the call and the qualification to preach were carefully considered and defined; and this important item of Methodist economy was then determined as we now have it, in answer to the question, "How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost and called of God to preach?" At this Conference, also, the circuits were mapped out and first published—seven in number.

From the germ-cell of the class-meeting up to the Annual Conference, the ecclesiastical economy has been evolved, and the organic structure is complete. The first provides for the reception and supervision of members, the last for the reception and supervision of ministers.

At an early day the question was asked: "Can there be any such thing as a general union of our Societies throughout England?" It was proposed to regard the Society in London as the mother Church; and for every assistant in country circuits to inquire particularly into the state of his circuit, and send such information to the stewards of the London Circuit, who would settle a regular correspondence with all the Societies. It was also proposed that a yearly collection be established, out of which any pressing Society debts might be discharged, and any Society suffering persecution, or in real distress, might be relieved. The necessity and utility of bringing into vigorous operation the con-nec-tional principle appears to have been suggested to the mind of Wesley; and contemplating its effects, he exultingly says: "Being thus united in one body, of which Christ Jesus is the Head, neither the world nor the devil will be able to separate us in time or in eternity." In the Annual Conference this bond of union was found. To it reports were made, from it rules and regulations emanated. Not only the *esprit de corps* of the preach-

ers was fostered, but their orthodoxy and pastoral fidelity were looked after. No doctrinal test was required for membership. If one desired "to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from his sins," he met the condition for entrance, and by keeping certain rules he met the condition of continuance; and it may be safely asserted that no awakened soul following those rules will fail of coming to gospel light and liberty. The members might be Arminian or Calvinistic, they might favor Dissent or affect the Establishment—no question on those points was raised in the class-meeting or love-feast; the one thing was to help sinners to conversion and Christians to holiness. It was very different, however, in the case of preachers—they were held closely to a doctrinal as well as an experimental standard. In the beginning of Methodism, the evil of dissentient if not heretical teachers was seen—clashing, and confusion, and contradiction. Therefore, one of the most important functions of the Annual Conference is to see that the trumpet gives no uncertain sound. It began by inquiring what to teach, and it inquires, year after year, if the doctrine accepted is taught. Hence, such items as these occur in the early Minutes: "Q. Can we unite, if it be desirable, with Mr. Ingham? A. We may now behave to him with all tenderness and love, and unite with him when he returns to the old Methodist doctrine. Q. Predestinarian preachers have done much harm among us; how may this be prevented for the future? A. Let none of them preach any more in our Societies. Q. Do any among us preach Antinomianism? A. We trust not." Whereupon a wholesome tract upon that subject was read and duly commented on in open Conference.

By and by we see the Conference providing for the support of preachers and their families, for the superannuated, for education, for missions, for book and tract distribution, and, in a word, guiding affairs with united wisdom. This final development of Methodist economy—destined to be repeated throughout all lands, and to be the most potent of assemblies—having been reached, henceforth we are to witness only such changes as growth makes in the spiritual body.



## CHAPTER XVII.

Methodism in Ireland—Friendly Clergy—Hymn-making—Marriage of Charles Wesley—Education—Kingswood School—Theological and Biblical: Using the Press—Making and Selling Books—Marriage of John Wesley.

A NEW field was entered about 1747. Ireland was then eminently a land of popery. Hearing that a Methodist Society had been formed in Dublin, John Wesley crossed the Irish Channel, and spent a few weeks in that city, preaching, examining the classes, and strengthening the Society. On his return Charles took his place in Ireland, and spent six months there, preaching with great power in many places. He was surprised at the kindness of his reception, at the absence of persecution. But so soon as the word began to take effect, so soon as the great door and effectual was open, the adversaries appeared. Nor was there any lack of them afterward. Instead of rotten eggs at long range, clubs were used, and many a scar and deep wound was received. This entry occurs in his journal in October: "I opened our new house at Dolphin's-barn, by preaching to a great multitude within and without. After preaching five times to-day, I was as fresh as in the morning." Something more civil than popish shillalahs occurred at Cork—a presentment by the grand jury: "We find and present," say they, "Charles Wesley to be a person of ill fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of His Majesty's peace, and we pray he may be transported." They made the same presentment with respect to seven other Methodist preachers, most of whose names they misspelled. Well might John Wesley pronounce this "memorable presentment" "worthy to be preserved in the annals of Ireland for all succeeding generations." Charles was in London when these enlightened Hibernians gave judgment concerning his character and declared him worthy of a felon's doom. He wrote a hymn of triumph on the occasion.

John Wesley often visited Ireland, to the end of his life. Forty-two times he crossed the Irish Channel, and spent, in his different visits, at least half a dozen years of his laborious life among that people. There were difficulties, but success had a

peculiar charm, and true piety an apostolic flavor, in that land. To his long and frequent absences the leaders in London objected; but Wesley's prophetic answer was: "Have patience, and Ireland will repay you." An efficient native ministry was raised up; a distinct, though not an independent, religious connection was formed; so that the Irish Methodists had their own Annual Conference, became a distinguished part of the Wesleyan body, and have had the gratification of presenting to the Wesleyan itinerancy some of its most able and useful ministers. Among these may be mentioned Thomas Walsh, Henry Moore, William Myles, Walter Griffith, Gideon Ousley, and Adam Clarke, to say nothing of those who are now serving their generation, by the will of God, both at home and in the wide field of missions.

American Methodism is indebted for some of its best ministers and members to the Emerald Isle. Strawbridge, Embury, and Drumgoole were only the first installment of spiritual wealth drawn from that source. In Ireland some of the richest trophies of Methodism were won, and there some of its rarest incidents occurred. "Swaddlers" the witty sinners dubbed the new sect. Cennick was preaching in Dublin on a Christmas-day. His text was Luke ii. 12: "Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a manger." A drunken fellow, who was listening at the door to pick up something by which he might ridicule this new religion, hearing the word "swaddling" often repeated, ran along the street exclaiming, "O these people are swaddlers, they are swaddlers!" The name quickly took, and became the badge of opprobrium through Ireland. Even the eloquence of Whitefield could not charm the rioters. Once he was near being killed outright. "I received many blows and wounds—one was particularly large and near my temples. I thought of Stephen, and was in hopes, like him, to go off in this bloody triumph to the immediate presence of my Master." He used to say, in speaking of this event, that in England, Scotland, and America he had been treated only as a common minister of the gospel, but that in Ireland he had been elevated to the rank of an *apostle*, in having had the honor of being stoned. In his American tours he often entertained friends with a history of narrow escapes from the mobs while preaching in the old country. A Virginia lady, who died at a great age, used to tell how he would catch her on his lap, saying: "Come here, my lit-

the girl," raising his wig and taking her hand, "here, put your finger in that gash—there is where the brickbat hit me."

At the Annual Conferences from time to time a few clergymen are seen. Wesley sought their coöperation as a body with small success. On his fingers he might have counted those of the Established Church who helped him to inaugurate the religious revival. Of Meriton little is known. He was in Cornwall once when Charles Wesley was preaching "against harmless diversions," having three clergymen among his auditors. "By harmless diversions," exclaimed the preacher, "I was kept asleep in the devil's arms, secure in a state of damnation for eighteen years!" No sooner were the words uttered than Meriton added aloud, "And I for twenty-five!" "And I," cried Thompson, "for thirty-five!" "And I," said Bennett, the venerable minister of the church, "for about seventy!" Hodges was the rector of Wenro, in South Wales, and his heart and pulpit were always open to the Wesleys whenever they visited the principality. The brothers often mention him in their journals, and always with respect and affection. He stood by them when they preached in the open air, and cheerfully bore a share in their reproach. Henry Piers, the vicar of Bexley, and his excellent wife, were both brought to the knowledge of the truth through the instrumentality of Charles Wesley, and were cordially attached both to him and his brother. Some of John's early publications were written in Piers's house, to which he retired as a quiet asylum from his public toils. Samuel Taylor was descended from the celebrated Dr. Rowland Taylor, who was forcibly ejected from his church in "bloody Mary's" reign; whom Bonner was about to strike with his crosier, and was only hindered by Taylor telling him he would strike back. He was vicar of Quinton in Gloucestershire, and, like Wesley, went out into the highways and hedges, and was a sharer in the brutal persecutions of Wednesbury, and other places. The parents of Richard Whatcoat, one of the first American bishops, belonged to Taylor's parish; and Richard, when a child, sat under his ministry.

In time Grimshaw, incumbent of Haworth, came on. He was converted through the labors of a Methodist, and so helped and coöperated with the itinerant preachers in his part of the country that they were called "Grimshaw's preachers." He visited the classes frequently, attended and preached at the quarterly-



meetings, and held love-feasts in the Societies. He maintained intimacy with the preachers, entertained them at his house, and built a chapel and dwelling-house for them at his own expense. The landlord at Colne complained that Grimshaw had preached in that town "damnation beyond all sense and reason," and that "every week, and almost every day, he preached in barns and private houses, and was a great encourager of conventicles." On account of his preaching excursions through his parish and beyond it, and his outdoor, off-hand talking and praying, he was reported to his bishop by the clergy; but his lordship had too much policy or piety to deal hardly with the good man. Grimshaw afterward observed to a party of friends: "I did expect to be turned out of my parish on this occasion, but if I had, I would have joined my friend Wesley, taken my saddle-bags, and gone to one of his poorest circuits." Four hamlets were comprised in his parish. He preached in these villages monthly, in order to reach the aged and infirm. Frequently he would preach before the doors of such as neglected the parish worship: "If you will not come to hear me at the church, you shall hear me at home; if you perish, you shall perish with the sound of the gospel in your ears." Vincent Perronet was vicar of Shoreham, in the county of Kent. He entered fully into those views of divine truth which the Wesleys inculcated, and became a spiritual and holy man. Two of his sons became itinerant preachers; he wrote various tracts in defense of the Wesleyan tenets; to him Wesley's "Plain Account of the People called Methodists" was originally addressed; and to the end of life he was the cordial friend and the wise adviser of John and Charles Wesley, under all their cares.

(The old Methodists were remarkable for their singing. Happy people love to sing.) Naturally, the two brothers were full of poetry; and religion fanned the fire into a holy flame.) Their taste in music may be gathered from Wesley's directions to the preachers: "Suit the tune to the words. Avoid complex tunes, which it is scarcely possible to sing with devotion. Repeating the same words so often, especially while another repeats different words, shocks all common sense, necessarily brings in dead formality, and has no more religion in it than a Lancashire horn-pipe." On one occasion he writes: "I was greatly disgusted at the manner of singing. Twelve or fourteen persons kept it to themselves, and quite shut out the congregation." It has been

estimated that during his life-time there were published no fewer than six thousand six hundred hymns from the pen of Charles Wesley only. While he was preaching two and three times a day, during the intervals of public worship he was engaged in the composition of hymns. When on his way from Bristol to Newcastle, says he: "Near Ripley, my horse threw and fell upon me. My companion thought I had broken my neck; but my leg only was bruised, my hand sprained, and my head stunned—which spoiled my making hymns, or thinking at all, till the next day." He wrote that animated hymn beginning,

See how great a flame aspires,  
Kindled by a spark of grace,

on the joyful occasion of his ministerial success, and that of his fellow-laborers, in Newcastle and its vicinity. The imagery, doubtless, was suggested by the large fires connected with the collieries, which illuminate the whole of that part of the country at night.

At Cardiff he writes: "My subject was wrestling Jacob. Some whole sinners were offended at the sick and wounded, who cried out for a physician. But such offenses must needs come." After preaching on the same topic at Gwynnap Gap, that grand amphitheater for field-preachers in Wales, and at the New Room in Bristol, and elsewhere, and being thoroughly saturated with the theme, he composed the hymn,

Come, O thou Traveler unknown,  
Whom still I hold, but cannot see.

The venerable Dr. Watts, then rich in years and honors, was too generous and pious to regard with envy the gifts conferred upon Charles Wesley. "Wrestling Jacob" is said to have especially arrested his attention; and, with a magnanimity worthy of his character, he exclaimed, "That single poem is worth all the verses I have ever written!"

At forty years of age Charles Wesley was married. Marmaduke Gwynne, of Garth, Wales, was one of Howell Harris's converts. His wife was one of six heiresses, inheriting each £30,000. Their mansion, with its twenty domestics and private chapel and chaplain, and nine children, would hardly be selected as the place for training the wife who first graced the itinerancy. "I expressed the various searchings of my heart in many hymns

on the important occasion," says Charles. Seventeen hymns, which he wrote at this time, on the subject of his marriage, have been preserved in his neat handwriting. Preliminaries being concluded to the satisfaction of all parties, Wesley's journal tells the rest (April 8, 1749): "I married my brother and Sarah Gwynne. It was a solemn day, such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage." Charles's account is characteristic:

Not a cloud was to be seen from morning till night. I rose at four; spent three hours and a half in prayer, or singing, with my brother. At eight I led my Sally to church. My brother joined our hands. It was a most solemn season of love. I never had more of the Divine presence at the sacrament. My brother gave out a hymn. He then prayed over us in strong faith. We walked back to the house, and joined again in prayer. Prayer and thanksgiving was our whole employment. We were cheerful, without mirth; serious, without sadness. A stranger that intermeddled not with our joy said it looked more like a funeral than a wedding. My brother seemed the happiest person among us.

Perhaps there was never a happier marriage. Small in person, cultivated in mind and manners, a sweet singer, she accompanied her husband in many of his long and rapid journeys, bearing with cheerfulness the inconveniences of an itinerant life, and also the scorn and violence of profane men, when he preached to them in the fields, highways, and other places of public resort. As she was greatly admired by him, he expressed a satisfaction perfectly natural in saying, "All look upon my Sally with my eyes." She went with him to Bristol, Bath, London, and several other towns, and was everywhere treated with the utmost respect as the amiable wife of one of the most useful men. According to the style of that age, she usually rode behind him on horseback, meeting with adventures which she was accustomed to relate pleasantly to the end of her very protracted life.

Soon after his marriage, Charles Wesley rented a small house in Bristol, and on the first of September he and his wife took possession of it, and commenced housekeeping. Referring to its dimensions, he remarks it was "such a one as suited a stranger and pilgrim upon earth." Mrs. Wesley adapted herself readily to her altered circumstances, on leaving the ample mansion of Garth, and taking up her residence in a humble cottage. She wrote with her own hand, in a manner the most neat and elegant, an inventory of the furniture with which they were provided. This document has been preserved among the family records—proof of her care and economy and of the limited scale



of their establishment. There they were accustomed to accommodate the itinerant preachers. John Nelson, John Downes, William Shent, and other men of kindred spirit and habits, were among their frequent guests. To the end of her life she used to speak of them with considerable emotion, remarking that she never met with persons better behaved, or more agreeable in their spirit and manners. Divine grace supplied the fictitious aid of education and social culture.

The death of their first-born, when only a few years old, by small-pox, was closely connected with the dangerous illness of Mrs. Wesley from the same disease. After her recovery, her features were so completely changed that the most intimate friends could not recognize her countenance. Her husband showed the tenderness and strength of his affection by declaring that he admired her more than ever. She was about twenty years younger than himself; and now that she had lost her beauty, she had also lost her very youthful appearance; so that the unseemly disparity between their ages was no longer perceptible.

Following his rule, "We would not make haste—we desire barely to follow Providence, as it gradually opens," Wesley began to provide for the education of the children of his preachers, and for Christian education generally. He "enlarged" the existing school at Kingswood, an unknown lady giving him £800 toward defraying the expenses. The school for the children of the colliers was not closed. It continued to exist more than sixty years. But in 1748 another school, for another class of children, was attached to this, and really became the Kingswood School, so famed in Methodist annals—for above half a century Methodism's only college; one of Wesley's favorite haunts; the *alma mater* of scores who did great service in Church and State; a homestead in which Methodism lingered till 1852. The visitor of to-day finds there a reformatory for vicious youth. Wesleyan pupils have been drawn away to ampler accommodations and more convenient localities at Bath, and Birmingham, and London.

Some of Wesley's rules for Kingswood could have been made only by a man who had no boys and never had been a boy himself. His half dozen teachers, his housekeepers, his servants, and his pupils, with their parents, were a load to carry. "I wonder," he says, "how I am withheld from dropping the whole design; so many difficulties have continually attended it." But success was

finally achieved; education by the Church was put on the right basis; and the Wesleyan educational systems, in both hemispheres, are the fruit of that handful of corn, waving like Lebanon.

Among the questions asked at the first Conference, and answered apparently without any dissent, was this: "Can we have a seminary for laborers?" They were not yet ready; the answer was, "If God spare us till another Conference." Accordingly, at the next session it was asked, "Can we have a seminary for laborers yet?" "Not till God gives us a proper tutor," was the reply. It was easy to get teachers for Kingswood School; but to teach the teachers, to train the laborers, required peculiar moral and mental fitness. Money, though scarce, was more plentiful than such men. The question was a standing one, and by and by proper tutors were raised up among themselves—men who not only knew the doctrines but the economy of Methodism—trained in it and devoted to it. Some of the ablest were detailed to this service, and the well-endowed biblical and theological schools of England and America are the answer to Wesley's question a hundred and forty years ago.

(The Foundry provided a room for the publication and sale of books.) This original book-room was a permanent feature. The Conference early ordained that every circuit was to be supplied with books by the Assistant. A return was to be made quarterly of money for books from each Society, and thus began that organized system of book and tract distribution which has secured to Methodism an extensive use of the religious press.

One of the most successful means adopted by the Wesleys for promoting religion was the publication, in a cheap and popular form, of interesting and instructive books. Before he went to Georgia, John Wesley published a single sermon, besides a revised edition of Kempis's "Christian Pattern." Later, he entered upon a course of literary labor of the most gigantic kind, in connection with his traveling, preaching, and pastoral care. At an early period he sent forth three volumes of sermons, explaining the leading doctrines which he had been accustomed to preach. In providing cheap literature, he anticipated modern times by many years; and in this kind of service he labored almost alone for nearly half a century. Moral and sacred poetry he recommended, and published selections of this kind in three volumes; and portable editions of Milton and Young, with notes explaining

the difficult passages, and directing attention to the finest paragraphs. He published, in a quarto volume, an amended translation of the New Testament, with explanatory notes, remarkable for spirituality, terseness, and point. A similar work, but less original and much less successful, he published on the Old Testament in three quarto volumes.

Most of Wesley's publications were small and cheap; but they had an immense circulation, and not only paid expenses, but left a profit. In a sermon, written in the year 1780, he apologetically remarks: "Two and forty years ago, having a desire to furnish poor people with cheaper, shorter, and plainer books than any I had seen, I wrote many small tracts, generally a penny apiece; and afterward several larger. Some of these had such a sale as I never thought of, and, by this means, I unawares became rich. But I never desired or endeavored after it. And now that it is come upon me unawares, I lay up no treasures upon earth; I lay up nothing at all. I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but, in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors."<sup>1</sup> Such was Wesley's charitable use of this source of income that it is estimated he gave away in the course of his life more than a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.<sup>2</sup> In his "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," he said: "Hear ye this, all you who have discovered the treasures which I am to leave behind me: If I leave behind me ten pounds (above my debts and my books, or what may happen to be due on the account of them), you and all mankind bear witness against me that I have died a thief and a robber." The state of his affairs at his death justified this pledge.

The son, if not wiser, was more practical than the father. Compare *Dissertationes in Librum Jobi*—that six hundred page folio, in Latin, which not one man in a million has read—with the series issued by the founder of Methodism called "A Christian Library," consisting of extracts and abridgments of the choicest pieces of practical divinity which have been published in the English tongue, in fifty volumes. This work was begun in 1749, and completed in 1755. Folios and quartos had to be reduced to 12mo volumes. Some were abridged on horseback, and others at way-side inns and houses where Wesley tarried for a night. Such an enterprise had never before been attempted. It was an effort to make the masses—his own Societies in particular—ac-



quainted with the noblest men of the Christian ages. His design was to leave out whatever might be deemed objectionable in sentiment, and superfluous in language; to divest practical theology of technicalities and unnecessary digressions; and to separate evangelical truth from Pelagian and Calvinistic error.

Independently of his own works, which occupy fourteen large octavo volumes, John Wesley abridged, revised, and printed no fewer than one hundred and seventeen distinct publications, reckoning his "Christian Library," his histories, and his philosophy, as only one each; and the brothers, separately and unitedly, published forty-seven poetical tracts and volumes, most of which were the compositions of Charles Wesley, and adapted to the use of public, domestic, and private devotion.\*

Charles Wesley's happy marriage appears to have been the means of deepening his brother's conviction that it is not good for man to be alone, and of inducing him to form the resolution of entering into the same state. The object of his choice was a widow, Grace Murray. She was among the first converts at the Foundry, but being a native of Newcastle, Wesley had employed her there to superintend the orphan-house and regulate the female classes. Her ability to be useful and her zeal recommended her to wider services. Of very humble origin, she is described as "possessed of superior personal accomplishments, with a mind cultivated by education, and an imagination lively in a high degree." Wesley used to call her his right-hand. He proposed marriage to her. She declared her readiness to accompany him to the ends of the earth, and confessed that the honor of being thus allied to him was a distinction for which she had not dared to hope. But he was busy going far and wide, and delays happened and hinderances. Many in the Societies of London and Bristol disapproved. Grace Murray was not equal to such a queenly position, in their opinion. The preachers, not knowing how much Wesley's heart was in the matter, interfered. They thought such a marriage would be a *mésalliance*—calculated to injure their leader's influence with the general public—likely to give an advantage to his enemies, would create disaffection, and circumscribe his labors; and so Charles, with the connivance of Whitefield and others, brought about a hasty marriage of Grace

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\* Jackson's Life of C. Wesley and his Centenary volume.

Murray with John Bennett—one of Wesley's itinerants. They crushed the feelings of the man, in order to maintain the dignity and usefulness of the minister. How deeply they wounded him they realized when it was too late. Perceiving Wesley's trouble, Whitefield wept and prayed over him, and did all he could to comfort him. The two brothers fell on each other's necks in tears. Wesley writes (Oct., 1749):

The sons of Zeruiah were too hard for me. The whole world fought against me; but above all, my own familiar friend. Then was the word fulfilled: "Son of man, behold! I take from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke; yet shalt thou not lament, neither shall thy tears run down." The fatal, irrecoverable stroke was struck on Tuesday last. Yesterday I saw my friend (that was), and him to whom she is sacrificed. . . . But "why should a living man complain?"

He had this interview with Grace Bennett three days after her marriage. For thirty-nine years they never met again: the meeting then was soon over; and he was never heard to mention her name afterward.

Bennett soon became an Independent minister—embraced Calvinism—abused "Pope John," and after ten years died. One of his sons became the pastor of a congregation near Moorfields. His widow returned to the Methodists, was useful as a leader of classes, and died at an advanced age.\*

For nothing was John Wesley more remarkable than the forgiveness of injuries, especially when he saw in the offender signs of regret. Charles knew that he had no gift of government, and supposed that his brother's marriage would be followed, as his own had been, by narrowing his itinerant field; and then the Societies would rapidly drift into Independency, and the revival movement cease.

Wesley's next matrimonial movement precluded any interference. On February 2, 1751, Charles's journal has this item: "My brother sent for me and told me he was resolved to marry. I was thunderstruck, and could only answer, he had given me the first blow, and his marriage would come like the *coup de*

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\* This was the cruellest stroke of Wesley's mortal life. After his death verses were found which he wrote to ease his heart. The first of twenty-eight we give:

O Lord, I bow my sinful head!  
 Righteous are all thy ways with man  
 Yet suffer me with thee to plead,  
 With lowly reverence to complain;  
 With deep, unutter'd grief to groan,  
 O what is this that thou hast done?"

*grace.* Trusty Ned Perronet followed, and told me the person was Mrs. Vazeille; one of whom I had never had the least suspicion." A fortnight later the London papers published the marriage of the Rev. John Wesley to a merchant's widow of large fortune. The large fortune consisted of £10,000 invested in three per cent. consols, and was wholly secured to herself and her two children. The general opinion at first was that she was "well qualified for her new position; she appeared to be truly pious, and was very agreeable in her person and manners." She understood that he was not to abate his itinerant labor; nor did he abate it. Two months after the marriage, with a sly hint at Charles possibly, Wesley wrote in his journal: "I cannot understand how a Methodist preacher can answer it to God to preach one sermon or travel one day less in a married than in a single state. In this respect surely 'it remaineth that they who have wives be as though they had none.'"

His wife traveled with him for some time, but soon grew dissatisfied with a life so incompatible with the convenience of her sex and the habits of her former life. Irritation came to be her chronic state, and when her mind was irritated, nothing could please her. The weather was either intolerably cold or hot; the roads were bad, the means of conveyance unbearable; the people by whom they were accommodated impolite; the provisions were scanty or ill prepared; and the beds were hard. Her husband's official duties—preaching, meeting classes, visiting the sick, regulating the Societies, carrying on an extensive correspondence, and writing constantly for the press—occupied so much of his time that he could not pay her all the attention she required. Unwilling to travel herself, she became equally dissatisfied with his habitual absence. At last her discontent took the form of a monomaniacal jealousy. She would drive a hundred miles to observe out of a window who was in the carriage with her husband on his entering a town. At first her complaints were carried to Charles, but soon even he and his wife became objects of bitter hostility, so that her language to them was scarcely less severe than that applied to her hapless husband. Charles generally called her "My best friend," for no other person told him of his faults with half the vehemence and particularity which characterized her rebukes and admonitions. This significant sentence occurs in a letter to his wife:



“I called, two minutes before preaching, on Mrs. Wesley, at the Foundry; and in all that time had not one quarrel.”

The gravest feature of the business was her opening Wesley's letters, intercepting and interpolating them; giving some to his enemies, and publishing others in the public prints. In 1771 she left his house, with the assurance that she would never return. He knew not, he says, the immediate cause of her determination, and adds: “*Non eam reliqui, non dimissi, non revocabo*”—I did not forsake her, I did not dismiss her, I will not recall her. There was a patched-up peace, with various intermissions, and she died ten years afterward. With her children, Wesley's relations were affectionate and pleasant. Southey says of the Xantippe, who tormented him in such a manner by her outrageous jealousy and abominable temper, that she deserves to be classed in a triad with the wife of Socrates, and the wife of Job, “as one of the three bad wives.”

Berridge, the quaint bachelor vicar of Everton—one of the evangelical clergy whose itinerant zeal was largely useful in founding Lady Huntingdon's Connection—wrote to the Countess concerning one of her preachers: “No trap so mischievous to the field-preacher as wedlock, and it is laid for him at every hedge-corner. Matrimony has quite maimed poor Charles, and might have spoiled John and George if a wise Master had not graciously sent them a brace of ferrets.”

If it was not for Wesley to enjoy the comforts of married life, he had the opportunity to exhibit patience. During a domestic wretchedness of thirty years, he kept on his way of duty, unwavering; abated nothing of consecration; and, withal, an unruffled temper seems to have been joined to an unflagging energy. Henry Moore, his biographer and intimate friend, records: “He repeatedly told me that he believed the Lord overruled this painful business for his good; and that if Mrs. Wesley had been a better wife he might have been unfaithful in the great work to which God had called him, and might have too much sought to please her according to her own views.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Temporary Decay of Whitefield's Popularity; Visits Scotland; Third Visit to America—Morris's Reading-house in Virginia—Samuel Davies—Commissary at Charleston tries to Suspend—No Intolerance in that Colony—South Carolina Unfavorable for this—Whitefield Buys a Plantation; Preaching to Negroes; Chaplain to Countess of Huntingdon; Among the Great.

WHITEFIELD'S situation on his second return to England was not comfortable. The separation from the Wesleys was not all. His popularity seemed to have passed away; the thousands who used to assemble at his preaching had dwindled down to two or three hundred. Worldly anxieties were fretting him, and those of a kind which made the loss of his celebrity a serious evil. The Orphan-house was to be maintained; he had now nearly a hundred persons in that establishment who were to be supported by his exertions; he was above £1,000 in debt on that score, and he himself not worth £20. Seward, the wealthiest and most attached of his followers was dead, and had made no provision for the payment of a heavy bill on the Orphan-house account, which he had drawn, and for which Whitefield was now responsible, and threatened with arrest. He called it a trying time. "Many, very many of my spiritual children," says he, "who at my last departure from England would have plucked out their own eyes for me, are so prejudiced by the dear Messrs. Wesleys dressing up the doctrine of election in such horrible colors, that they will neither hear, see, nor give me the least assistance." But his popularity soon returned; there was no resisting the charm of his eloquence, and no denying the genuineness of his religion. Yielding to many invitations, he visited Scotland, where the Whitefieldian type of Methodism was more acceptable than the Wesleyan. His success in Scotland was, in some respects, greater than it had been in England. "Glory be to God," he writes, "he is doing great things here. I walk in the continual sunshine of his countenance. Congregations consist of many thousands. Never did I see so many Bibles, nor people look into them with such attention when I am expounding. Plenty of tears flow from the hearers' eyes. I preach

twice daily, and expound at private houses at night, and am employed in speaking to souls under distress great part of the day. Every morning I have a constant levee of wounded souls, many of whom are quite slain by the law." In the great city churches, and on braes and hill-sides, and in public parks, Whitefield had wonderful scenes—"equal to some in America."

The partisans of the Solemn League and Covenant hardly endured the fact that he had not signed that formula, but they charitably considered that he had been born and bred in England, and knew no better. He records: "The awakenings of people have been, in a good many, attended with outcries, faintings, and bodily distresses; in many more the work has proceeded with great calmness; but the effects in both sorts are alike good and desirable." One of their chief ministers says: "Never did I see such joyous melting in a worshiping assembly. There was nothing violent in it, or like what we may call screwing up the passions; for it evidently appeared to be deep and hearty, and to proceed from a higher spring." Inquiry-meetings, and societies for prayer and praise, increased amazingly. Preaching and expounding several times a day, Whitefield could not meet the eager desire of the multitude to hear the word. This is the report of the minister at Dundee:

The Lord is a sovereign agent, and may raise up the instruments of his glory from what Churches or places he pleases; and glorifies his grace the more when he does it from those Societies whence and when it could be least expected. Though Mr. Whitefield be ordained, according to his education, a minister of the Church of England, yet we are to regard him as one whom God has raised up to witness against the corruptions of that Church; whom God is still enlightening, and causing to make advances toward us. He has already conformed to us, both in doctrine and worship, and lies open to light to conform to us in other points. He is thoroughly a Calvinist, and sound on the doctrines of free grace, on the doctrine of original sin, the new birth, justification by Christ, the necessity of imputed righteousness, and the operations of the Holy Ghost. These he makes his great theme, drives the point home to the conscience, and God attends it with great power. And as God has enlightened him gradually in these things, so he is still ready to receive more light, and so soon as he gets it he is more frank in declaring it. God, by owning him so wonderfully, is pleased to give a rebuke to our intemperate bigotry and party zeal, and to tell us that "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but the new creature."

Returning to the Tabernacle, and thence ranging about in England for awhile, Whitefield again visited Scotland, where the aristocracy especially received and honored him and his gospel.



He received £500 on his first visit for the Orphan-house, and a large amount on the second. On his way to London, he was still further encouraged by receiving letters from America informing him of the remarkable success of the gospel there, and that God had stirred up some wealthy friends to assist his orphans in their late extremity. His journal records this timely mercy: "The everlasting God reward all their benefactors. I find there has been a fresh awakening among them. I am informed that twelve negroes, belonging to a planter lately converted at the Orphan-house, are savingly brought home to Jesus Christ."

Late in 1744 he was again in America, where he spent four years. Though feeble in health, beginning in the Middle States, he took a circuit of fifteen hundred miles through the Northern and Eastern States, preaching with the old-time power. The opposition had organized: there were "testimonials," personal and official, against him, but to no purpose; the Lord was for him. In Maryland and Virginia the people flocked "as doves to the windows." As itinerating was his delight, and America a new world particularly pleasing, he now began to think of returning no more to his native country. "The door for my usefulness opens wider and wider," he writes. "I love to range in the American woods, and sometimes think I shall never return to England any more." The awakening of five or six years ago had not ceased. As he moves on southward, his journal says:

The gentleman offered me £800 a year, only to preach among them six months, and to travel the other six months where I would. Nothing remarkable happened during my way southward; but when I came to Virginia, I found that the word of the Lord had run and was glorified. During my preaching at Glasgow some persons wrote some of my extempore sermons, and printed them almost as fast as I preached them. Some of these were carried to Virginia, and one of them fell into the hands of Samuel Morris. He read and found benefit. He then read them to others; they were awakened and convinced. A fire was kindled; opposition was made; other laborers were sent for.

This account may be supplemented by a Virginia historian. Morris, a plain, devout man, obtained from a young Scotchman a volume of Whitefield's sermons. He invited his neighbors to come and hear him read them, and while he read many were convinced of sin. Thus, while Whitefield was passing in a flame of revival along the sea-board, an obscure brick-layer in the woods of Hanover was reading to weeping sinners the burning words that fell from his lips in Scotland. Had he known this.

how eagerly would he have come and taught them the way of the Lord more perfectly! Morris read to his rustic congregation from other books, such as "Boston's Fourfold State," and "Luther on Galatians." The excitement spread through the settlement; his house was too small to hold the crowds that flocked to his reading, and they determined to build a house "merely for *reading*," for none of them had yet attempted even public prayer. It was called "Morris's Reading-house," and is forever connected with the history of Presbyterianism in Virginia. Reports went far and wide of the scenes at the "Reading-house," and Morris was invited to read his good books in various places. Thus the work extended with power through that portion of the country where priests and people had sunk into a cold and heartless formality.\*

Morris's hearers and himself, having absented themselves from church on Sundays, were called to account by the court, and took shelter under the name of Lutherans—as they knew no other, and Luther's book had been useful to them. Soon a Presbyterian minister—Robinson—came that way, and taught them that they were really Presbyterians, and took them nominally under his care, and passed on; for he durst not tarry in that colony. Three years afterward (1746), Governor Gooch, of the colony, issued his proclamation forbidding, under severest penalties, the meetings and teachings of Moravians and Methodists. "How numerous these obnoxious dissentients may have been, or how far His Excellency succeeded in suppressing them, we have not the means of ascertaining."†

The grateful people of Hanover raised a sum of money and offered it to Mr. Robinson.‡ He declined it; they insisted; but he still refused. They found out where he would spend his last night in the county, and gave the money to the gentleman of the house, who privately placed it in his saddle-bags. In the morning his saddle-bags were handed him. Suspecting an artifice, he opened them, and behold! the money "was in the sack's mouth." He told them he would take the money not for his own use, but to be devoted to the education of a poor young man of promise and piety, then studying for the ministry. "As soon as he is licensed," said Robinson, "we will send him to visit you. You may now

\* Bennett's Memorials of Methodism in Virginia. † Hawks's Narrative of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia. ‡ Bennett's Memorials.

be educating a minister for yourselves." This young man was Samuel Davies. He appeared in 1747, with license from the General Court, to preach "in and about Hanover at four meeting-houses." Great was the joy of the people, and the work was such as angels might approve. In a few years there were over three hundred communicants, including a number of negroes, forty of whom the young pastor had baptized on a profession of faith. He felt a deep interest in the slaves, and embraced every opportunity for giving them religious instruction. He says, in 1755: "The number of slaves that attend my ministry at particular times is about three hundred." But the watchful guardians of that attenuated form of the apostolic succession which had survived "Morris's Reading-house," are to be heard from. We quote from one of their own authors:

Mr. Davies, however, did not carry on his work without encountering opposition. The officers of the government, who of course adhered to the Establishment, strenuously contended that his proceedings were illegal, inasmuch as the English Act of Toleration did not extend to Virginia. This position was denied by the Dissenters, who claimed equal rights with their brethren at home [England], and the matter was brought before the courts of the colony.\*

The point was argued by Peyton Randolph, attorney-general, on one side, and by Mr. Davies on the other; and the Dissenter gained his cause by a majority of the court. When afterward, on the appointment of Princeton College, Mr. Davies visited England to solicit aid for the college, he obtained from the attorney-general, Sir Dudley Rider, an official declaration that the English Act of Toleration was the law of Virginia. Armed with this opinion, on his return he resumed and enlarged his labors in the colony, and continued them until 1759 when, on the death of Jonathan Edwards, he was appointed President of Princeton College. This remarkable man died at the age of thirty-seven.

In North Carolina Whitefield labored, but, as he says, "for too short a time, and little was done." Orphan-house troubles oppressed him as he drew near to Georgia. His own words are, "At times they almost overwhelmed me." In Charleston he always found friends, and he records:

God has put into the hearts of my South Carolina friends to contribute liberally toward purchasing in this province a plantation and slaves, which I purpose

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\*Hawks's Narrative of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia.



to devote to the support of Bethesda. Blessed be God! the purchase is made. Last week I bought, at a very cheap rate, a plantation of six hundred and forty acres of excellent land, with a good house, barn, and outhouses, and sixty acres of ground ready cleared, fenced, and fit for rice, corn, and every thing that will be necessary for provisions. One negro has been given me. Some more I purpose to purchase this week. An overseer is put upon the plantation, and I trust a sufficient quantity of provisions will be raised this year.

On his first visit to Charleston, Whitefield was cordially received by Commissary Garden, who invited him twice into his pulpit, and assured him that he would defend him with his life and property, should the same arbitrary proceedings ever be commenced against him which Mr. Wesley, his predecessor, had met with in Georgia.\* But at the time of his second visit a great offense had occurred—the Methodists had taken to field-preaching, and Whitefield led them. He entered Charleston “in a blaze of glory” after filling a long list of outdoor and indoor appointments. The Commissary’s fine church, St. Philip’s, was not open to him any more. And this episcopal shadow undertook to do what the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury never ventured upon—to suspend Whitefield.

There was no Established Church in South Carolina, and never had been. The proprietaries of that colony had asked John Locke to frame the “fundamental constitution;” and he incorporated into it freedom to worship God; no legal preference was given one sect over another. The document was approved in 1669, and the original copy—in the handwriting of Locke, it is believed—is preserved in the Charleston Library.

Another circumstance concurred to make the Commissary’s closed doors and his wrath impotent. Admiral de Coligny had endeavored, the century before the English settlement in South Carolina, to establish a colony of his brother Protestants, the Huguenots, at Port Royal and Beaufort. That emigrant scheme failed, but the next did not. The favorite mistress of Louis XIV., Madame de Maintenon, was heard to say, “If God spares him, there will be only one religion in his kingdom.” Accordingly the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was signed at

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\*All the colonies were considered as under the care of the Bishop of London; and he was represented in each by a “commissary who supplied the office and jurisdiction of a bishop in outlying places of the diocese.” The power was very restricted. Dr. Blair, in Virginia, was the first commissary appointed for America, in 1689. He held the office fifty-three years.

Fontainebleau, 1685; all churches of the Protestants were closed, their religious worship was prohibited, and their ministers required to leave the country in fourteen days on pain of the galleys. This brought to Carolina, and especially to Charleston, a large number of Huguenots—than whom Continental Europe could not furnish a nobler race. Their family names may still be recognized in the annals of Church and State, and have especially enriched Methodism—an intelligent, energetic, chivalrous, liberty-loving people.

The existence of laws framed by John Locke, and the influence of such principles as French Protestants represented, made South Carolina the last place in the world for the display of petty ecclesiastical tyranny. Not invited into St. Philip's Church, and refused the sacrament by the Commissary, Whitefield found plenty of room and welcome in other churches, and preached to the edification of multitudes. Whereupon he was cited to appear before the Commissary and four of his clergy to answer for the offense of having "officiated as a minister in divers meeting-houses in Charleston, in the province of South Carolina, by praying and preaching to public congregations, and at such times to have omitted to use the form of prayer prescribed in the 'Book of Common Prayer.'" Whitefield took an appeal from the colonial to the home ecclesiastical court. It is claimed by some that the Court of Appeal treated the case as unworthy of notice; by others, that Whitefield neglected to prosecute the appeal. So it was, at the end of twelve months, Whitefield being absent in England, Commissary Garden proceeded:

We therefore pronounce, decree, and declare that the said George Whitefield, for his excesses and faults, ought, duly and canonically, and according to the exigence of the law in that part of the premises, to be corrected and punished, and also to be suspended from his office; and, accordingly, by these presents, we do suspend him, the said George Whitefield; and for being so suspended we also pronounce, decree, and declare him to be denounced, declared, and published openly and publicly in the face of the Church.

This, in 1741. Whitefield made twelve visits after that to South Carolina and Georgia, with increasing power and popularity. Garden in Charleston would have treated him as Caus-ton in Savannah did Wesley; but times had changed. On this visit, Whitefield found more friends than ever, and by Carolina help was enabled to keep Bethesda from sinking. The charter

of the Georgia Trustees would soon expire, and then he hoped, under better government, to do more for the Orphan-house. Indeed, he projected a classical school in connection with it, and made a beginning before leaving for the Northern States, where he closed his third American campaign. He says (September 11): "We saw great things in New England. The flocking and power that attended the word was like unto that seven years ago. Weak as I was, and have been, I was enabled to travel eleven hundred miles, and preach daily."

His strength was giving way; indeed, he was sick and under a physician; but, according to announcement, a congregation had met to hear a sermon. This is his account:

While the doctor was preparing a medicine, feeling my pains abated, I on a sudden cried: "Doctor, my pains are suspended; by the help of God, I will go and preach, and then come home and die!" In my own apprehension, and in all appearance to others, I was a dying man. I preached, the people heard me as such. The invisible realities of another world lay open to my view. Expecting to stretch into eternity, and to be with my Master before the morning, I spoke with peculiar energy. Such effects followed the word, I thought it was worth dying for a thousand times. Though wonderfully comforted within, at my return home I thought I was dying indeed. I was laid on a bed upon the ground, near the fire, and I heard my friends say, "He is gone." But God was pleased to order it otherwise. I gradually recovered; and soon after, a poor negro woman would see me. She came, sat down upon the ground, and looked earnestly in my face, and then said, in broken language: "Master, you just go to heaven's gate, but Jesus Christ said, Get you down, you must not come here yet, but go and call some more poor negroes." I prayed to the Lord, that if I was to live, this might be the event.

About this time, being much troubled with stitches in his side, he was advised to go to the Bermudas, for the recovery of his health. He accordingly embarked, and landed there March, 1748. His daily preaching on the islands was an event in their religious history, and prepared the way for future missionaries to the slaves. His own account being taken for it, he was not a good negro-preacher, as every one acquainted with that business will see on reading it:

Sunday, May 1. I preached twice with power, especially in the morning, to a very great congregation in the meeting-house; and in the evening, having given notice, I preached about four miles distant, in the fields, to a large company of negroes, and a number of white people who came to hear what I had to say to them. I believe in all there were nearly fifteen hundred people. As the sermon was intended for the negroes, I gave the auditory warning that my discourse would be chiefly directed to them, and that I should endeavor to imitate the example of Elijah, who, when he was about to raise the child, contracted himself to its length.



The negroes seemed very sensible and attentive. When I asked if they all did not desire to go to heaven, one of them, with a very audible voice said, "Yes, sir." This caused a little smiling; but in general every thing was carried on with great decency; and I believe the Lord enabled me so to discourse as to touch the negroes, and yet not to give them the least umbrage to slight their masters. If ever a minister in preaching needs the wisdom of the serpent to be joined with the harmlessness of the dove, it must be when discoursing to negroes. Vouchsafe me this favor, O God, for thy dear Son's sake!

May 2. Upon inquiry, I found that some of the negroes did not like my preaching because I told them of their cursing, swearing, thieving, and lying. One or two of the worst of them, as I was informed, went away. Some said they would not go any more. In my conversation these two days, with some of my friends, I was diverted much, in hearing several things that passed among the poor negroes, since my preaching to them. One of the women, it seems, said "that if the book I preached out of was the best book that was ever bought at London, she was sure it had never all that in it which I spoke to the negroes." The old man who spoke out loud and said "Yes" when I asked them whether all the negroes would not go to heaven, being questioned by somebody why he spoke out so, answered that the gentleman put the question once or twice to them, and the other fools had not the manners to make me any answer, till at last I seemed to point at him, and he was ashamed that nobody should answer me, and therefore he did. Another, wondering why I said negroes had black hearts, was answered by his black brother thus: "Ah, thou fool! dost thou not understand it? He means black with sin."

After three months' stay, Whitefield left. "They have loaded me with provisions for my sea store, and in the several parishes, by a private voluntary contribution, have raised me upward of one hundred pounds sterling. This will pay a little of Bethesda's debt, and enable me to make such a remittance to my dear yoke-fellow as may keep her from being embarrassed, or too much beholden in my absence. Blessed be God for bringing me out of my embarrassments by degrees!" Having transmitted to Georgia what was given for the Orphan-house, and dreading to go back to America in that season of heat, for fear of relapsing, he took the opportunity of sailing for England, and reached London in July, 1748. On Whitefield's return, he found himself in no very agreeable situation. His congregation at the Tabernacle was sadly scattered, and all his household furniture had been sold to help pay the Orphan-house debt, which yet was far from being canceled.

His congregation was soon recruited, and a very unexpected door was opened to him. The Countess of Huntingdon, before his arrival, had ordered Howell Harris to bring him to her house at Chelsea, as soon as he came on shore. He went, and having

preached twice, the Countess wrote to him that several of the nobility desired to hear him, and she desired him to be one of her chaplains. Lords Chesterfield and Bolingbroke were among his auditors at Chelsea, the Countess having invited those persons who stood most in need of repentance. The former complimented the preacher with his usual courtliness; the latter is said to have been much moved by the discourse, and invited Whitefield to visit him. Such progress did serious piety make among this class of people that the cynical Walpole, in May following, wrote to a friend on the Continent: "If you ever think of returning to England, you must prepare yourself with Methodism. This sect increases as fast as almost any religious nonsense ever did. The Methodists love your big sinners, as proper subjects to work upon; and, indeed, they have a plentiful harvest."

This introduces us to a new chapter in Methodism; and as its messengers pass from the negroes to the nobility, and from Moorfield Commons to the drawing-room of peers, we shall have opportunity to witness their fidelity.

Whitefield visited Scotland the third time, in the autumn of this year, and it was not his last visit. From his leaving London to his reaching Edinburgh, he preached ninety times, to about one hundred and forty thousand people. At Lady Huntingdon's, he writes (October 11): "For a day or two, her ladyship has had five clergymen under her roof. Her house is indeed a Bethel. To us in the ministry, it looks like a college. We have the sacrament every morning, heavenly conversation all day, and preach at night. This is to *live at court*, indeed."

"If true religion could by any means become fashionable, the result would put ministerial fidelity to tests as severe as any that persecution can invent. In Scotland the doors were open to Whitefield. "Saints," says he, "have been stirred up and edified; and many others, I believe, are translated from darkness to light, and from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God. The good that has been done is inexpressible. I am intimate with three noblemen and several ladies of quality who have a great liking for the things of God. I am now writing in an earl's house, surrounded with fine furniture; but, glory be to free grace, my soul is in love only with Jesus."

Not all the doors were open. The extremists there insisted on the divine right of presbytery as much as the extremists in

England insisted on the divine right of prelacy. In the synod of Glasgow a motion was made to prohibit or discourage ministers from employing Whitefield. The speeches in favor of the motion made these points: He was a priest of the Church of England; he had not subscribed the Solemn League and Covenant; chimerical scheme of the Orphan-house; want of evidence that the money collected by him is rightly applied; asserting assurance of faith; and lastly, his being under a sentence of suspension by Commissary Garden, from which he had appealed to the High Court of Chancery, and made oath to prosecute that appeal in a twelvemonth, and yet it was never prosecuted.

On the other hand, the ministers who were against the motion, spoke in this manner: "I blush to think [said one] that any of our brethren should befriend a proposal so contrary to that moderation and catholic spirit which now is, and I hope ever will be, the glory of our Church. I am sensible that many things in the Church of England need reformation; but I honor her, notwithstanding, as our sister Church. If Bishop Butler, Bishop Sherlock, or Bishop Secker, were in Scotland, I should welcome them to my pulpit."

Said another bold Scot:

Whether Mr. Whitefield's scheme of the Orphan-house be prudent or not, it is demonstrable it was honestly meant. The magistrates of Savannah published, three years ago, in the *Philadelphia Gazette*, an affidavit that they had carefully examined his receipts and disbursements, and found that what he had collected in behalf of the orphans had been honestly applied; and that, besides, he had given considerably of his own property. Lastly, with respect to the prosecution of his appeal, Mr. Whitefield exerted himself to the utmost to get his appeal heard, but could not prevail on the Lords Commissioners so much as once to meet on the affair; they, no doubt, thinking of Mr. Garden's arbitrary proceedings with the contempt they deserved. But, say some, "Mr. Whitefield, being under a suspension not yet reversed, is now no minister." But for what was he suspended? Why, for no other crime than omitting to use the form of prayer prescribed in the communion-book, when officiating in a Presbyterian congregation. And shall Presbyterian ministers pay any regard to a sentence which had such a foundation?

The motion was lost. Whitefield went on, preaching three and once as often as seven, times in a day. This could not last; want of sleep and loss of appetite and general debility ensued. "I am brought now," says he, "to the short allowance of preaching but once on week-days, and twice on a Sunday." He was



not afraid of emotional religion nor ashamed of it, anywhere. Reporting the result of a preaching excursion where "we had not one dry meeting," he refers to a learned dry Calvinistic friend thus: "Had my dear Mr. Henry been there, to have seen the simplicity of so many dear souls, I am persuaded he would have said, *Sit anima mea cum methodistis.*"

Whitefield is said to have preached eighteen thousand sermons during the thirty-four years of his ministry. The calculation was made from a memorandum-book in which he noted down the times and places of his preaching. This would be something more than ten sermons a week.

Wesley tells us that he preached about eight hundred sermons in a year. In fifty-three years, reckoning from the time of his return from America, this would amount to forty-two thousand four hundred.

But the exhaustive outlay of Whitefield in delivering a sermon was greater than Wesley experienced. After preaching, both alike, instead of taking rest, were offering up prayers, intercessions, with hymns and spiritual songs, in every house to which they were invited. The history of the Church of Christ affords few instances of men thus incessantly employing their whole strength—as it were, every breath they drew—in the business of their sacred vocation.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Honorable Women not a Few—The Conversion of a Countess; Her Devotion to Methodism; Espouses the Calvinistic Side; Her Work—Chapels—Trevecca College—Dartmouth—Newton—An Archbishop Reproved—Forced out of the Establishment—Her Death.

SELINA SHIRLEY, Countess of Huntingdon, was descended of an ancient and honorable house. Her husband, of the house of Hastings, was the ninth Earl of Huntingdon; and his sisters, Lady Betty and Lady Margaret Hastings, were women of excellence. The Countess of Huntingdon was the *Lady Bountiful* at Donnington Park, and took less pleasure in the fashionable follies of the great than in ministries of charity among her dependents and neighbors. She frequently attended Fetter-lane Society. Her conversion followed that of her sister-in-law, Lady Margaret, who, spending some time at Ledstone House, a family estate in Yorkshire, was induced by curiosity to hear Ingham preach. The Methodist was invited to preach at Ledstone church, and became a frequent visitor at the Hall. The two sisters made an open profession of faith, and were ever bright examples of it. In 1741, Ingham was married to Lady Margaret, twelve years his senior. The marriage was performed at the residence of her brother in London. The Countess assured the Wesleys of her cordial sympathy with them. The first Conference, having been invited in a body, was received at her mansion in London, and Wesley preached on the text, "What hath God wrought?" Piers and Hodges took part in the service; while Maxfield, Richards, Bennett, and Downes sat around them, recognized as genuine though unordained ambassadors of Christ.

That a peeress of the realm should espouse and zealously support a cause and a people everywhere spoken against, led her husband (who seems to have treated her with highest consideration) to bring about an interview with Bishop Benson, who had been his tutor. The bishop endeavored to convince her of the unnecessary strictness of her sentiments and conduct. In reply she pressed him hard with scripture, as to his own responsibilities; his temper was ruffled and he lamented that he had ever

laid hands on George Whitefield, to whom he attributed all this trouble. "My lord," was her reply, "mark my words: on your dying-bed that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacency." And the event verified the prediction. When near death, years afterward, the bishop sent ten guineas to Whitefield, as a token of regard and veneration, and begged an interest in his prayers.

The Lord was merciful; and through this honorable woman, pure in life as she was exalted in character and station, the neglected rich and great had an opportunity to hear the gospel. Her house was turned into a chapel, both in London and at her country-seats, and there the Wesleys and Whitefield, with other evangelical clergymen—Romaine, Hervey, Hill, Shirley, Toplady, Venn, Berridge, and Madan—expounded the word and administered sacraments. Lords and ladies, dukes and duchesses, who filled the parlors, heard faithful warnings. The Duchess of Buckingham writes, in reply to an invitation:

I thank your ladyship for the information concerning the Methodist preachers; their doctrines are most repulsive, and strongly tinctured with impertinence and disrespect toward their superiors, in perpetually endeavoring to level all ranks, and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting, and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding.\*

Lady Huntingdon was left a widow, in the thirty-ninth year of her age, and her husband showed his confidence in her judg-

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\*The author of the "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon" (two volumes), from which our information is derived, tells of another person in high life who had an experience similar to "common wretches:" no other than the titled mistress of George II. "Mr. Whitefield's lectures to the 'brilliant circle' at Lady Huntingdon's were evidently as faithful as they were eloquent. The well-known Countess of Suffolk found them so. Lady Rockingham prevailed on Lady Huntingdon to admit this beauty to hear her chaplain; he, however, knew nothing of her presence; he drew his bow at a venture, but every arrow seemed aimed at her. She just managed to sit out the service in silence, and when Mr. Whitefield retired she flew into a violent passion, abused Lady Huntingdon to her face, and denounced the sermon as a deliberate attack on herself. In vain her sister-in-law, Lady Betty Germain, tried to appease the beautiful fury, or to explain her mistake; in vain old Lady Elenor Bertie and the Duchess Dowager of Ancaster, both relatives of Lady Suffolk, commanded her silence; she maintained that she had been insulted. She was compelled, however, by her relatives who were present to apologize to Lady Huntingdon. Having done this with a bad grace, the mortified beauty left the place to return no more."



ment by leaving the entire management of his children and their fortunes in her hands. Controlling her own time and large resources, she now began to give the gospel to the poor. Accepting the Calvinistic view, she found in Whitefield's Methodism the form of Christianity to which she devoted her life. Accompanied by her chaplains she made tours through the kingdom, when great congregations were gathered and preached to. She built churches at Bath and Brighton, wherein titled and noble visitors heard Methodist preaching, while they sought health and pleasure. Hannah More piqued herself on her attachment to the Established Church, and, by way of disproving the charge that she was a Methodist, wrote: "Had I been irregular, should I not have gone sometimes, during my winter residence at Bath, to Lady Huntingdon's chapel, a place of great occasional resort?"

Horace Walpole heard Wesley at this Bath chapel, and his criticism on the preacher as well as on the house is of record: "Wondrous clever, but as evidently an actor as Garrick." As for the sermon: "There were parts and eloquence in it; but toward the end, he exalted his voice and acted very vulgar enthusiasm." On one occasion Wesley, after preaching here, writes: "I know not when I have seen a more serious, a more deeply attentive congregation. Is it possible? Can the gospel have a place where Satan's throne is?"\*

Walpole called the Countess "The Queen of the Methodists." The scholarly and pious Venn styled her better, "A star of the first magnitude in the firmament of the Church."† This chapel was supplied with evangelical preachers of highest ability, each serving for a week or a month, or longer, and must more or less have leavened the class of people who resorted to Bath. From this pulpit the gospel sounded out through a wide region, and reached the ears of those who seldom hear the plain-dealing messengers of truth. Occasionally one who came for the healing waters died. How the funeral of a Scotch earl was "improved," Whitefield tells: The corpse was taken to this chapel; house crowded; "three hundred tickets given out to the nobility and gentry;" proper hymns sung; the sermon followed; and for "five days together," says Whitefield, "we have been attending at this house of mourning. Surviving relations sit around the corpse, attended by their

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\*The Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon.

domestics and supporters, twice a day. Two sermons every day; life and power attend the word; and I verily believe many dead souls have been made to hear the voice of the Son of God." At the conclusion, the remains of Earl Buchan were shipped to Scotland; and the historian adds, "The young Earl of Buchan now became very conspicuous in the ranks of Methodism."

This remarkable woman purchased theaters, halls, and dilapidated chapels in London, Bristol, and Dublin, and fitted them up for public worship. Numerous chapels were also erected by her aid throughout England, Wales, and Ireland. She mapped out the land into districts, and sent out evangelists from among her most successful adherents, to travel and to preach. She bore the traveling expenses of an active corps of able ministers, and kept them circulating through the kingdom. Her gifts for religious purposes exceeded \$500,000. She sold her jewels to build chapels for the poor. Her aristocratic equipage and liveried servants were parted with, that she might save in order to give. It was at Lady Huntingdon's house that Lord Dartmouth became acquainted with Wesley and Whitefield. His open and earnest Methodism did much to help those who were suffering its reproach. John Newton, because of his connection with the Methodists, was refused ordination by the Archbishop of York, but Lord Dartmouth prevailed on the Bishop of Lincoln to ordain him, and presented Newton to the vicarage of Olney. He patronized the college in America that is named for him, and contributed liberally to the Orphan-house in Georgia. To him Cowper alludes in his poem on Truth:

We boast some rich ones whom the gospel sways,  
And one who wears a coronet and prays.

Newton, after giving to Wesley reasons, in his health and circumstances, which forbade him to be an itinerant preacher, adds as the "weightiest difficulty:" "Too many of the preachers are very different from Mr. Grimshaw; and who would wish to live in the fire? So that, though I love the people called Methodists, and suffer the reproach of the world for being one myself, yet it seems not practicable for me to join further than I do."

The vicar of Olney was instrumental in the conversion of Thomas Scott, a neighboring clergyman who took vows and entered into orders as godless a man as any in his parish. He tells how the work began that ended in giving to the Church an edi-

fyng commentator, an industrious author, and one of the founders of the Evangelical party:

In 1774 two of my parishioners, a man and his wife, lay at the point of death. I had heard of the circumstance, but according to my general custom, not being sent for, I took no notice of it till one evening—the woman being dead and the man dying—I heard that my neighbor, Mr. Newton, had been several times to visit them. Immediately my conscience reproached me with being shamefully negligent in sitting at home within a few doors of dying persons, my general hearers, and never going to visit them. Directly it occurred to me that whatever contempt I might have for Mr. Newton's doctrines, I must acknowledge his practice to be more consistent with the ministerial character than my own. He must have more zeal and love for souls than I had, or he would not have walked so far to visit, and supply my lack for care to those who, as far as I was concerned, might have been left to perish in their sins. This reflection affected me so much that without delay, and very earnestly—yea, with tears—I besought the Lord to forgive my past neglect; and I resolved thenceforth to be more attentive to this duty; which resolution, though at first formed in ignorant dependence on my own strength, I have, by Divine grace, been enabled hitherto to keep.

By reading "The Force of Truth," wherein Scott details his experience and how he was brought to Christ, Wilberforce is said to have been converted. Wilberforce's "Practical View" is credited, in turn, with the conversion of many who gave character to the philanthropy and Christian enterprise of his day.

Lady Huntingdon's chapels so increased that she was led to provide a college for the education and training of preachers. Trevecca House, in South Wales, an ancient castle, was procured and fitted up, and opened for religious and literary instruction in August, 1768. Great preparations had been made. Whitefield preached the dedicatory sermon: "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and bless thee." And on the following Sunday he preached to thousands in the college-court: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Describing the scenes of spiritual interest, and the unction upon sermons, exhortations, sacraments, and love-feasts, that attended the dedication, he writes: "What we have seen and felt at the college is unspeakable." The preparation of the college not only exhausted the available means of the Countess, but drew liberally upon her rich friends. Ladies Chesterfield and Glenorchy, and other devout and aristocratic persons, gave large help. John Wesley approved her plan. John Fletcher was the first president, and one of his converted colliers from Madely Woods was the first student that entered



the college. Joseph Benson, the commentator subsequently, was head master. The scheme was to admit only such young men as were truly converted, and meant to devote themselves to God's service. Students were at liberty to stay three years, during which time they were to have education and maintenance free, and a suit of clothes once a year. Afterward they might enter the ministry of the Established Church or any other Protestant denomination. Indeed, she seemed to encourage rather than discourage their taking orders in the Establishment, and exerted her influence to procure ordination and livings for them, thinking thus to spread a revival influence where it would be most useful, and where approach by other means was slow and difficult.

Trevecca for years was the head-quarters of the Calvinistic Methodists. It supplied their pulpits, and afforded important ministerial contributions to the Dissenters and the Established Church. The Countess resided there much of her time; it was convenient for the extended work which she was sustaining, and she could readily dispatch assistance from it to her many pulpits. Horses were kept to convey students on Saturdays to distant points, while nearer appointments were visited on foot. Frequently they went forth on remote "rounds" preaching in fields, barns, market-places, and private houses. The annual "commencements" were like Methodist camp-meetings. On one occasion a thousand and three hundred horses of visitors and guests were turned into a large field, besides what were stationed in neighboring villages, and a great number of carriages. A scaffold was erected at one end of the college-court, on which a book-stand was placed, and thence six or seven preached successively, to attentive and lively congregations. A visitor speaks of three hundred people breakfasting together on the premises; of sermons, exhortations, sacraments, love-feasts, in English and Welsh; of "many very hearty amens, and a fervent crying of 'Glory to God!'"

Fletcher kept up his labors at Madely, and in the circuit he had formed around it; but he found time to superintend Trevecca. Benson describes his visits to the school of the prophets:

Here it was that I saw—shall I say—an angel in human flesh? I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. Prayer, praise, love, and zeal—all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty—were the elements in which he continually lived. Languages, arts, sciences, grammar, rhet-

orie, logic, even divinity itself, as it is called, were all laid aside when he appeared in the school-room among the students. And they seldom hearkened long before they were all in tears, and every heart caught fire from the flame that burned in his soul.

Closing these addresses, Fletcher would say: "As many of you as are athirst for the fullness of the Spirit of God follow me into my room." Two or three hours were spent there in such prevailing prayer as seemed to bring heaven down to earth. "Indeed," says Benson, "I frequently thought, while attending to his heavenly discourse and divine spirit, that he was so different from, and superior to, the generality of mankind as to look more like Moses, or Elijah, or some prophet or apostle come again from the dead, than a mortal man dwelling in a house of clay."

A refreshing instance of Christian fidelity in high places is on record. The Archbishop of Canterbury, during one winter of fashion, had been giving balls and convivial routs at the archiepiscopal palace.\* His wife "eclipsed all the gay personages." The Methodist Countess, through her titled relatives, "obtained an audience with his Grace of Canterbury," and respectfully but earnestly remonstrated. She was snubbed, and his Grace violently abused those whom he was pleased to brand as Methodists and hypocrites. Lady Huntingdon then obtained an audience with the king, through Lord Dartmouth. George the Third, if not religious, was religiously inclined, and the archbishop soon received an admonitory letter:

MY GOOD LORD PRELATE: I could not delay giving you the notification of the grief and concern with which my heart was affected at receiving authentic information that routs had made their way into your palace. . . From the dissatisfaction with which you must perceive I behold these improprieties, not to speak in harsher terms, and on still more pious principles, I trust you will suppress them immediately; so that I may not have occasion to show any further marks of my displeasure, or to interpose in a different manner. May God take your Grace into his almighty protection!

G. R.

A large building in London, known as the Pantheon, which had been erected as a place of Sunday amusements in a wicked and very neglected district, fell into the Countess's hands, and was fitted up, like another Foundry, for a church. "My heart," she says, "is strangely set upon having this temple of folly dedicated to Jehovah Jesus." Great expense was incurred, and great preparations made, and great preachers engaged. The

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\* Dr Cornwallis was then Archbishop of Canterbury.

scheme moved off prosperously, with crowded congregations and gracious revivals; but a catastrophe was at hand. The avaricious pluralist whose parish embraced the Pantheon—named Spafield's Chapel—put in his legal claims and pressed them. He claimed the right of nominating ministers to its pulpit, and of appointing a clerk whose salary should be paid by the proprietors; of reading prayers and preaching and administering the sacraments there, whenever he wished; of receiving a stipend (£40 per annum) for appointing such Methodist clergy as the proprietors desired, for the chapel; that all the money collected at the sacrament and from sittings be under the control of his church-wardens; and, for due performance of this, that the proprietors enter into a bond of £1,000.\*

The chapel authorities not yielding to his terms, Sellen instituted suit in the Spiritual Court of the Bishop of London, against the two clergymen officiating at Spafield's Chapel for irregularity in preaching in a place not episcopally consecrated, and for carrying on divine worship there contrary to the wish of the minister of the parish. Verdicts were obtained against them, the chapel was closed, and one of the finest congregations in London was dispersed. As a peeress of the realm, the Countess supposed she had a right to employ her own chaplains at any time and place, and she put them in the stead of the two suspended ministers. But Sellen, like another Sanballat, renewed the attack in the ecclesiastical courts against every clergyman she engaged to preach there; and the verdict being against them, they discontinued their services. Harassed and obstructed, the Countess was obliged to take shelter under the Toleration Act. "In this case," she wrote, "I am reduced to turn the finest congregation not only in England, but in any part of the world, into a Dissenting meeting." Lady Huntingdon and her preachers were strongly attached to the Church of England; used its forms as far as practicable in worship, and preached its doctrines, and hoped to carry on a work of revival within its pale—if not helped, at least not prohibited; but that hope is at an end. In creed and at heart she and her chaplains and co-workers were not Dissenters. But in order to protect her chapels from suppression, or appropriation by the Established Church, she had to avail herself, in 1779, of the law by which all religious societies that would not be sub-

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\* The Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon.



ject to the established ecclesiastical power, could control their own chapels by an avowal, direct or virtual, of Dissent. Her "Connection" thus took its place among the Dissenting Churches, and that brilliant and powerful band of preachers whom she had kept circulating through the kingdom under the best advantages, stirring spiritual stagnation and enlightening darkness, among the high and low—Romaine, Madan, Venn, Berridge, Townsend, and others—ceased preaching in her chapels.

When the lease upon Trevecca expired, the college was removed nearer the metropolis, and exists to our day as Cheshunt College. There John Harris, author of "Mammon," and other useful and evangelical scholars have been bred and labored.

The Countess died at the age of eighty-four, uttering with her last breath: "My work is done. I have nothing to do but to go to my Father." She left her fortune for the support of sixty-four chapels which she had helped to build in various parts of the kingdom.

The Lady Huntingdon Connection was in part absorbed by the Dissenting Churches, and went to revive "the languishing Non-conformity of the age;" but its greater result was the contribution made, directly and indirectly, to the Evangelical, or Low-church, element in the Establishment, from which have sprung measures in legislation and in philanthropy that have signalized the past and the present century.

## CHAPTER XX.

The Opening in the Colonies—Intolerance in Virginia—Patrick Henry on the Parsons—Tobacco—Whitefield's Sixth Visit—Strawbridge—The First Society and First Methodist Meeting-house in America—Orphan-house—The Founder's Comfort—Whitefield's Last Visit; his Death; his Will—*Ereunt Omnes*.

THE current of emigration, set in motion by revolutions and persecutions in the Old World during the seventeenth century, distributed along the shores of the New very different populations. New England received earnest Puritans; New York, Dutch Reformers; Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Presbyterians and Quakers; the equal laws of Maryland invited a generous population of different creeds; the Carolinas were enriched by Palatines and Huguenots; but Virginia was stinted to an accession of bigoted Churchmen, who neither preached the gospel themselves nor allowed others to preach it. Numbers of cavaliers and loyal gentry flocked to the ancient Dominion, where toasts to the health of Charles II. were drank long before the Restoration, and where the Act of Toleration was not accepted for fifty years after William and Mary had been crowned.

Whitefield's gown gave him a passport through Virginia, except, possibly, in a few places; Devereux Jarratt was another Grimshaw, and that scholarly and Christian man, Dr. Blair, a Scotchman by birth, was for half a century the commissary. Doubtless there were other and similar mitigations of the moral influence which the execrable State-church system was calculated to produce. A high authority says: "If we turn from the clergy to the laity, facts present themselves such as might naturally be supposed to exist under the ministrations of such a clergy. Indeed, it scarce admits of a doubt that between the two classes there was a mutual action and reaction for evil; each probably contributed to make the other worse."\*

^ We have seen how the Methodists and Moravians were warned off before they came in sight, and with what difficulty the Presbyterians got a footing in the colony.† The Baptists bore the brunt of persecution. "They were beaten and imprisoned," says

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\*Hawks's Narrative of the Protestant Episcopal Church.







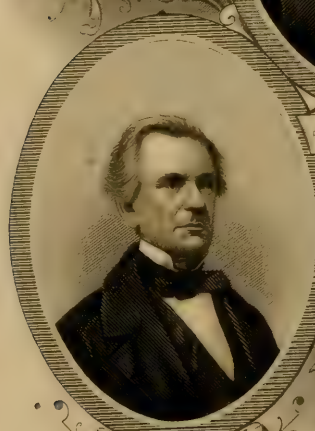
PHILIP EMBURY



THOMAS WEBB



ROBERT STRAWBRIDGE



LOV OF PERCE



WILLIAM WINANS

Dr. Hawks, the historian of his Church, "and cruelty taxed its ingenuity to devise new methods of punishment and annoyance." But they stood it nobly. John Bunyan and Bedford jail were before them, not to speak of a higher inspiration. They marched to prison, singing as they went "Broad is the road that leads to death," and preached to crowds through the prison-bars.

About 1763, the covetousness and arrogance of the exclusive claimants of "apostolic succession" in Virginia Colony received a final blow from a quarter which themselves had invoked. A parson's regular salary, besides house and glebe, was sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco. The crop of 1755 being short, the legislature passed an "act to enable the inhabitants of the colony to discharge tobacco debts in money," at the rate of sixteen shillings and eight pence per hundred weight—at the option of the debtor. Planters who had tobacco to sell got fifty or sixty shillings per hundred weight, and paid the parson at the rate of sixteen shillings and eight pence. This act applied to all other tobacco creditors as well as to ministers. Two years later, the crop again failing, the law was reënacted. The clergy appealed to the home government, and by the Bishop of London their complaints were brought before the king and council; and His Majesty denounced the law, and pronounced it null and void. Sustained by this declaration, the clergy sued to recover their stipends in tobacco; and the test case was brought in the county of Hanover.

The case stood thus: Plaintiff (the clergy) claimed upon the old law, which gave sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco; defendant (the people) pleaded the act of 1757. To this plea plaintiff demurred that said act had been declared, by the king in council, null and void. The court sustained the demurrer, and this was in effect a decision of the cause for the clergy. It only remained to inquire, by a jury, into the amount of damages which the plaintiff had sustained, and to render judgment. The counsel of defendant looked upon the result as inevitable, candidly said so to his client, and retired from the cause. In this desperate stage of the matter, Patrick Henry was employed by defendant. It was his first case. Leaving law pretty much out of view, he played skillfully on the passions and prejudices of the jury, excoriated the lazy and greedy parsons, and poured torrents of eloquent denunciation upon the royal decision as indicating a wanton disregard of the true interests of a suffering people, and

a heartless contempt of their necessities. Waxing bolder, he declared that the king who disallowed and annulled laws of a salutary nature instead of being the father, degenerated into the tyrant of his people. The opposing counsel cried out, "He has spoken treason!" The bench, however, did not think so, and the advocate of the people proceeded without interruption in the delivery of a philippic that made royally inclined ears to tingle. The jury, carried away by such extraordinary eloquence, returned a verdict for plaintiff of *one penny damages*. The court, influenced as much as the jury by the fascinating power of the advocate, unanimously refused to grant a new trial; and this refusal, like the verdict, was received with shouts of acclamation by the crowd within and without the house. In spite of all efforts of officers to preserve order in court, the people seized Mr. Henry at the bar, raised him on their shoulders, and carried him in a triumphal procession about the court-yard.

The Establishment went to pieces after that, though not all at once. Its power of using the civil magistrate to vex and hinder others survived, in some localities, its loss of public respect; so that in a letter written in 1774, Madison, then a young man, thus refers to the condition of things in his vicinity:

— Pride, ignorance, and knavery prevail among the priesthood, and vice and wickedness among the laity. This is bad enough; but it is not the worst I have to tell you. That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among some; and to their eternal infamy, the clergy furnish their quota of imps for such purposes. There are at this time in the adjacent county not less than five or six well-meaning men in close jail for publishing their religious sentiments, which, in the main, are very orthodox.

Dissenters increased so rapidly that at the breaking out of the Revolution they were estimated at two-thirds of the population. The Methodists came in and began their work. 'In 1785 Jefferson's Bill for Religious Freedom became law.' In 1801 an order was passed for the sale of all the glebes by the overseers of the poor as soon as vacated by existing incumbents, except those made as private donations subsequent to 1777. Thus were cumberers of the ground cleared away, and a noble soil was prepared for a better growth.

On his sixth visit to America, Whitefield reached Virginia the same year Patrick Henry dealt the effective blow for disestablishment. Whether the two orators, whose eloquence was serving the cause of Christianity from different directions, ever met,



we have no information. Asthma and other ailments were oppressing the great preacher. One physician prescribed a *perpetual blister*. "But I have found," said he, "*perpetual preaching* to be a better remedy. When this great catholicon fails, it is over with me."

To escape the summer heat, he passed on to the North, and seems to have spent the winter there, amidst the scenes of his former gospel-ranging. Next year, as he made his way to Georgia, if he had turned aside a little to the right from his usual track through Maryland, he might have heard the sound of axes and the felling and hewing of trees. ♥The Methodists were building their first meeting-house in America.† The people who were destined so largely to cultivate the Western Continent began their "clearing" in 1764, in the woods of Frederick (now Carroll) county, Maryland, thirty miles north-west of Baltimore.†

Robert Strawbridge was born at Drumsna, county Leitrim, Ireland. "Drumsna is a clean, picturesque, and beautiful little village on the banks of the Shannon."\* As early as May, 1758, Wesley preached there. Strawbridge was converted; went to Sligo, where he joined the Society, and was soon heard of as a preacher at Kilmore and elsewhere. Some now "fallen asleep" were accustomed to speak of him as "a man of devoted piety and considerable preaching abilities." Marrying a Methodist wife at Terryhugan—Miss Piper—he bid farewell to Ireland to find a home in the New World. He settled, probably in 1760, on Sam's Creek—then in the backwoods of Maryland—and opened his house for preaching. ♥A log meeting-house was built a few years afterward, about a mile from his home.♥This cradle of American Methodism is entitled to minute description: ♥Twenty-two feet square; the logs sawed for a door-way on one side, and smaller openings made on the other three sides for windows, and no regular floor. In this primitive chapel, which has had many successors in our land and Church, Strawbridge preached for many years. Although it had no "regular floor," it had a pulpit, for under the pulpit of the log meeting-house were buried two of the preacher's little children. From this point the hearty and zealous evangelist itinerated into Eastern Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and Southern Pennsylvania. Doubtless, he gathered not a little of the fruit where Whitefield had shaken the boughs.

\* Ireland and the Centenary of American Methodism, by Wm. Crook, D.D.

He is described as "of medium size, dark complexion, black hair; had a sweet voice, and was an excellent singer." His more important qualities may be read in his work and history.

The Sam's Creek Society, consisting at first of twelve or fifteen persons, was a fountain of good influence to the county and the State. It early gave four or five preachers to the itinerancy. Strawbridge founded Methodism in Baltimore and Harford counties. The first Society in the former was organized by him at the house of David Evans,\* near the city, and the first chapel in the county was erected by them. The first native Methodist preacher of the continent, Richard Owen, was one of his converts.† He was long the most effective co-laborer of Strawbridge, traveling the country in all directions, founding Societies and opening the way for the coming itinerants.‡

Strawbridge was poor, and the family were often straitened for food; but he was a man of strong faith, and would say to them on leaving, "Meat will be sent here to-day." The calls upon him to go to distant parts of the country to preach became, in course of time, so frequent and pressing that his family were likely to suffer in his absence, so that it became a question with him, "Who will keep the wolf from my door while I am abroad looking after the lost sheep?" Meanwhile, his friendly neighbors agreed to cultivate his little farm without charge, and to see that his wife and children wanted for nothing during his absence. In this way this zealous servant of Christ continued to labor in different parts of Frederick, and throughout the length and breadth of Baltimore county, breaking up new ground, forming new Societies, and establishing permanent places for preaching—God working through him by the word which he preached. It is delightful to look back, after a lapse of ninety years and upward, and recount one by one the long list of those who could claim this primitive missionary as the instrument of their salvation, many of them persons of intelligence and of influence in the communities in which they lived, joining themselves first to Christ, and then devoting their substance to build up a godly seed for generations following; and of these we recur with feelings of satisfaction to the parents of the late Dr. Thomas E. Bond.‡

Continuing his journey southward through Virginia and Carolina, Whitefield pauses at New Berne, where "good impressions were made." "This, with every other place, being open and exceedingly desirous to hear the gospel," he says, "makes me almost determined to come back early in the spring." Having preached in Charleston, he once more arrived at Savannah, and had the happi-

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\* David Evans said that, "about the year 1764, he embraced the Methodist religion under Mr. Strawbridge." (Dr. Hamilton's Discourse on "Early Methodism in Maryland.")

† History of Methodist E. Church, by Dr. Stevens. ‡ Dr. Hamilton, 1856.

ness to find the state of the colony as prosperous as he could wish. "The colony," says he, "is rising fast; nothing but plenty at Bethesda; and all arrears, I trust, will be paid off before I leave it, so that I hope to be freed from these outward incumbrances."

The old Trustee government had given way to the colonial or royal, and a governor and council had affairs in hand, with Hathersham in a position of influence. Whitefield had planned a college in connection with the Orphan-house, for the youth of Carolina, Georgia, and the West Indies; but the ecclesiastical authorities in England resisted the granting of the charter proposed by him, though presented and advocated by Dartmouth, unless the conditions were inserted that a Church of England man should be president, and that not extempore prayers, but the Prayer-book, must be daily used in the college. Doubtless the hand of the Charleston Commissary was in this. "That bottom was not broad enough." The charter, on such conditions, was respectfully but firmly declined, and Whitefield and his friends contented themselves with an institution of humbler name, at Bethesda, yet affording much greater facilities for education than any that had been before enjoyed in that quarter.

Whitefield informed the Georgia government that he had expended £12,000 upon the Orphan-house, and now he wished to attach to it a college; that, in order to accomplish his purpose, he was prepared to lay out a considerable sum of money "in purchasing a large number of negroes" for the cultivation of the rice and indigo plantation for the "future support of a president, professors, and tutors;" and he asked the council to grant him, in trust, for the purposes aforesaid, two thousand acres of land. Moreover, he proposed to transfer his plantation from Carolina to the Georgia Colony. He writes:

Bethesda, January 14, 1765. God hath given me great favor in the sight of the governor, council, and assembly. A memorial was presented for an additional grant of land, consisting of two thousand acres. It was immediately complied with. Both houses addressed the governor in behalf of the intended college. Every heart seems to leap for joy, at the prospect of its future utility.

February 13. Yesterday morning, the governor, and Lord G——, with several other gentlemen, favored me with their company to breakfast. . . . Now farewell, my beloved Bethesda; surely the most delightful place in all the southern parts of America. What a blessed winter have I had! Peace and love, and harmony and plenty, reign here! Thanks be to God, all outward things are settled on this side the water. The auditing the accounts, and laying the foundation for



a college, hath silenced enemies and comforted friends. The finishing of this affair confirms my call to England at this time.

On his way to New York to take ship, he writes: "All along from Charleston to this place, the cry is, 'For Christ's sake stay and preach to us!' O for a thousand lives to spend for Jesus!" Arriving in England in time to dedicate the Bath Chapel of the Countess of Huntingdon, he tarried there until Trevecca College was opened, filling up the space between with itinerant labors over the United Kingdom.\* Quitting England for the last time, he landed (Nov. 30) in Charleston, and was welcomed by the people as never before.

From his home at Bethesda, he writes (January 11, 1770): "Every thing exceeds my most sanguine expectations. I am almost tempted to say, 'It is good for me to be here;' but all must give way to gospel-ranging—divine employ!" In another letter: "And the increase in this colony is almost incredible. Two wings are added to the Orphan-house, for the accommodation of students; of which Governor Wright laid the foundation, March 25, 1769." Bethesda is head-quarters for awhile, and it is pleasant to witness his joy, after so long toil. The Orphan-house has nearly done its work, and the Lord comforts his servant at the last. Of the many letters in this strain, we extract from a few. In April, he writes to a London friend:

You are daily remembered at a throne of grace. How glad would many be to see our Goshen, our Bethel, our Bethesda! Never did I enjoy such domestic peace, comfort, and joy, during my whole pilgrimage. It is unspeakable, it is full of glory. Peace, peace unutterable, attends our paths; and a pleasing prospect of increasing, useful prosperity is continually rising to our view. We enjoy a little heaven on earth here. With regret I go northward, as far as Philadelphia at least, next month. Though I am persuaded, as the house is now altered, I should be cooler here during the summer's heat than at any other place I know of, where I used to go. I should be glad to treat you with some of the produce of our colony, which is much earlier than yours. The audits, etc., sent with this, be pleased to communicate to all my real friends. Every thing concurs to show me that Bethesda's affairs must go on as yet in their old channel. I wish some books might be procured for our infant library. In all probability, I shall not return hither till November. Was ever any man blessed with such a set of skillful, peaceful, laborious helpers? O Bethesda, my *Bethel*, my *Peniel*! My happiness is inconceivable. A few hundred besides what is already devoted would finish all, I do not in the least doubt. I have had nine or ten prizes lately. You know what I mean—nine

\* It was on this trip to England that he buried his wife, concerning whom this may suffice: When one, on a certain occasion, asked how Whitefield had married, the reply was, "Not so well as Charles Wesley, nor so bad as John."

or ten orphans have lately been taken in. Halleluiah! halleluiah! let chapel, Tabernacle, heaven, and earth resound with halleluiah! I can no more. My heart is too big to speak or add more.

With such feelings he leaves Bethesda, not to return. On his way northward from Philadelphia, he writes: "Pulpits, hearts, and affections seem to be as open and enlarged toward me as ever. Praise the Lord, O my soul! As yet I have my old plan in view—to travel in these northern parts all summer, and return late in the fall to Georgia. Through infinite mercy, I still continue in good health, and more and more in love every day with a pilgrim life. People of all ranks flock as much as ever. To all the Episcopal churches, as well as most of the other places of worship, I have free access. Notwithstanding I preach twice on the Lord's-day, and three or four times a week besides, yet I am rather better than I have been for many years. To the long-suffering, never-failing Lord be all the glory. So many new as well as old doors are open, and so many invitations sent from various quarters, that I know not which way to turn myself. Perhaps I may not see Georgia till Christmas. As yet I keep to my intended plan in respect to my returning. Lord Jesus, direct my goings in thy way!"

Since Whitefield was last in New York, the Methodists had organized there under Philip Embury, an Irish local preacher who came out the same year with Strawbridge, but had not been quite so forward in his work. They had built a church and called on Wesley for help.

On the third of August, 1769, in the Conference at Leeds, he said from the chair: "We have a pressing call from our brethren of New York (who have built a preaching-house) to come over and help them. Who is willing to go?" Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor responded. "What can we do further in token of our brotherly love? Let us now take a collection among ourselves." This was immediately done, and out of it £50 were allotted toward the payment of the New York debt, and £20 given to the brethren for their passage.

While Whitefield was on the Atlantic making for the port of Charleston, these two missionaries were sailing before the same winds for the port of Philadelphia. He met them and gave them his blessing. His mission of preparation was drawing to a close, and they were to enter into his labors where he left off.

On Saturday morning, September 29, 1770, he set out for

Boston; but before he came to Newburyport, where he had engaged to preach next morning, he was importuned to preach by the way, at Exeter. A friend observing him more uneasy than usual, said: "Sir, you are more fit to go to bed than to preach." To which Whitefield answered, "True, sir;" but turning aside, he clasped his hands together, and looking up said: "Lord Jesus, I am weary *in* thy work, but not *of* thy work. If I have not yet finished my course, let me go and speak for thee once more in the fields, seal thy truth, and come home and die." He preached in the open air to accommodate the multitudes that came to hear him, no house being able to contain them, and continued his discourse nearly two hours, by which he was greatly fatigued. In the afternoon he set off for Newburyport, where he arrived that evening, and soon after retired to rest, intent on preaching the next day. He awoke many times in the night, and complained very much of an oppression at his lungs, breathing with great difficulty. Oppressed by asthma, early in the morning he sat up in the bed, and prayed that God would be pleased to bless his preaching where he had been, and also bless his preaching that day, that more souls might be brought to Christ; prayed for direction, whether he should winter at Boston or hasten to the southward; prayed for a blessing on all his labors and his friends in America and Europe, for Bethesda and the Tabernacle. At six o'clock he rose and moved quickly to the open window for air, and said to his servant, "*I am dying*;" and sitting in his chair he expired. (He was buried beneath the pulpit of Federal Street Church, Newburyport, and there his remains are to this day.)

Eulogy, or a summing up of such a life and character, is needless. Dying testimony was not required of him whose living testimony had so often glorified his Lord. He had a presentiment that it would be so in his case. So ardent were his desires after the heavenly happiness that he often longed to finish his work, and to go home to his Saviour. "Blessed be God," said he, "the prospect of death is pleasant to my soul. I would not live here always; I want to be gone. Sometimes it arises from a fear of falling, sometimes from a prospect of future labors and sufferings. But there are times when my soul has such foretastes of God that I long more eagerly to be with him; and the prospect of the happiness which the spirits of just men made perfect now enjoy often carries me, as it were, into another world."



The impression upon the public mind may be imagined. The funeral-discourses, by leading preachers in Old and New England, would make a volume. Wesley, according to request, delivered a sermon in the Tabernacle worthy of the occasion and of himself. The effect of the announcement of his death upon the inhabitants of the Southern provinces, especially that of Georgia, was most profound. In Savannah all the black cloth in the stores was bought up. The governor and council, in deep mourning, convened at the State-house and went in procession to church, and were received by the organ playing a funeral-dirge, and two funeral-sermons were preached.

Our readers may feel an interest in that portion of his will which disposes of Bethesda affairs:

In respect to my American concerns, which I have engaged in simply and solely for His great name's sake, I leave that building, commonly called the Orphan-house, at Bethesda, in the province of Georgia, together with all the other buildings lately erected thereon, and likewise all other buildings, lands, negroes, books, furniture, and every other thing whatsoever, which I now stand possessed of in the province of Georgia aforesaid, to that elect lady, that mother in Israel, that mirror of true and undefiled religion, the Right Honorable Selina, Countess Dowager of Huntingdon; desiring that as soon as may be after my decease, the plan of the intended Orphan-house Bethesda College may be prosecuted; if not practicable, or eligible, to pursue the present plan of the Orphan-house academy, on its old foundation and usual channel; but if her ladyship should be called to enter her glorious rest before my decease, I bequeath all the buildings, lands, negroes, and every thing before mentioned, which I now stand possessed of in the province of Georgia aforesaid, to my dear fellow-traveler, and faithful, invariable friend, the Honorable James Habersham, president of His Majesty's honorable council.

The Countess entered upon the discharge of the trust earnestly. All the ministerial students who had gone out from the college were called in to form "the Mission to North America," and a solemn assembly was held at Trevecca for a fortnight. In due time several missionaries who had been selected and ordained for this field sailed for Georgia, with a Church of England president for Bethesda, and the Countess's own housekeeper to put things in proper order, "that nothing should be wanting on their parts to render the establishment of the president, master, and students suitable to the character they bore as belonging to the Countess of Huntingdon." Visions of missionary fields among the natives, and in distant settlements, were bright. Such a jubilee as attended the preparation and leave-taking is seldom equaled at

this day, when missionary operations are more frequently enterprised. The Countess soon added an estate of her own to the Bethesda plantation, where slaves—in addition to the fifty left by Whitefield—cultivated rice and indigo, for the support of the institution. The preachers were well received by the people. The first remittance from the proceeds of the trust sent by her agents, Tatnall & Glenn (£26, 10s), the Countess returned to them to be expended on the trust, and marks the occasion:

I must therefore request that a woman slave be purchased with it, and that she may be called Selina, after me, in order best to establish that period of my only receipt of money during the whole course of my possessing that trust, or my own property there; and that in your accounts it may fully fix and determine the time of this remittance, taking care that it may appear as by my special appointment.\*

The conduct of business so complicated as an orphanage, a college, a mission, and a large plantation, with the owner thousands of miles away, turned out as might be supposed. Her clerical superintendent, Piercy, lived high, and sent no itemized accounts to her ladyship, who had remitted, and was remitting, large sums to keep things going. She complains of “his having driven to Boston forty-one of my best slaves and sold them,” and appropriated the large proceeds, all without her consent.†

The Orphan-house was accidentally destroyed by fire. The Revolutionary War came on, and the reverend president and missionaries took advantage of the reduction of Charleston by the British forces, in 1780, to return to England; and the estates of the Countess were confiscated.

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\* The devout Hervey spent the winter 1751–2 in London, mostly at the house of Whitefield. A mutual review of their theological works occupied part of their time. After sharing Whitefield's hospitality, Hervey left a singular gift. “When you please to demand, my brother will pay you £30, for the purchase of a negro. And may the Lord Jesus Christ give you, or rather take for himself, the precious soul of the poor slave!” Whitefield readily acquiesced. He answered: “You are resolved not to die in my debt. I think to call your intended purchase *Weston*, and shall take care to remind him by whose means he was brought under the everlasting gospel.”

† The Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon (Vol. II., pp. 266–271).

## CHAPTER XXI.

Arminian Methodism Planted—First Laborers: Strawbridge; Embury; Williams; King—These Irregulars Occupying the Ground and Preparing the Way-- Which was the First—The Log Meeting-house—The Grave of Strawbridge.

WHILE an abortive attempt was being made, under the patronage of an English countess, to establish Calvinistic Methodism in Georgia, the foundation of its Arminian type was well laid in Maryland by the poor Irish farmer, Strawbridge; the chapel at New York, under the carpenter, Embury, was prospering; and Robert Williams, with John King, was forming classes and planning circuits in Virginia and North Carolina.

The bigotry of Louis XIV., who had expelled the Huguenots from France, sent also the Protestants of the Lower Rhine—the Palatinate—into many lands for refuge. They were of German blood and Lutheran faith; and the armies of Turenne, by order of his popish master, were let loose upon them in 1688. Houses and villages were laid waste by fire and sword. The Elector Palatine could see from the towers of Manheim, his capital, no less than two cities and twenty-five villages on fire at once. About three thousand of these Palatines came to Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Over a hundred families settled in Limerick, Ireland. They were thrifty in building and planting, but being isolated both by religion and language, their moral condition became as bad as that of their neighbors, or worse.

In 1752 Wesley preached in one of the villages of these Palatines. He repeated his visit. Philip Embury was one of the early converts, and a Society was formed in his village. In 1760 Philip and his family, two of his brothers and their families, Paul Heck and Barbara his wife, with a goodly company of their countrymen, emigrated to New York. Philip Embury was born in Ballingran, in 1728. It is probable that he heard Wesley on the occasion of his first visit to Limerick, and there is a tradition in the family that he always traced his conversion to that sermon. A small book, in the possession of his family, has the following entry, in his own handwriting: "On Christmas-day, being Monday, ye 25th of December, in the year 1752, the Lord



shone into my soul by a glimpse of his redeeming love, being an earnest of my redemption in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. PHIL. EMBURY." He was shortly after appointed a class-leader, and was consistent and faithful. Within a brief period he became a local preacher. He was a carpenter; and it is believed that the principal portion of the timber work in connection with the first church among the Palatines was done by Embury's own hand. In 1758 Wesley held a Conference, for the second time, in Limerick. At this Conference, among those recommended for the itinerancy were Philip Embury of Ballingran, and William Thompson of Enniskillen.\* Philip was put on the "reserve list," and while building the church met with Mary Switzer, and married her; and thus put an end to his itinerant expectations, and got turned to America. Thompson became a leader of the Wesleyan host, and was its first president after Wesley's death. "The presumption is," says an excellent authority, "that Embury attempted some religious service shortly after landing in New York; but being constitutionally timid and retiring, and meeting with little or no encouragement, and having no suitable place in which to conduct the services, he abandoned the idea of attempting any public services, at least for the present. He joined the Lutherans, and we have the testimony of his son that he never abandoned the practice of family worship. During the period in which Embury's 'talent lay hid in a napkin' several of his children were born, who were baptized among the Lutherans."†

In 1765 a second party of Palatine families arrived in New York, from Ballingran and the old neighborhood. Their arrival doubtless awakened tender memories, and brought fresh reports of the class-meetings and congregations where those immigrants, who were Methodists, formerly worshiped; for it seems the most of them were Wesleyans, or members of the Irish Protestant Church. The Palatines who came first had backslidden generally, and the new-comers were no better. When they met, after the day's labor, card-playing formed the staple amusement. There is no evidence that Embury ever played with them. One evening, in the autumn of 1766, a large company were assembled playing cards as usual, when Barbara Heck came in, and hastily seized the cards, and throwing them into the fire, administered a

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\*Ireland and American Methodism, by the Rev. W. Crook, D.D. †Ibid.

rebuke to all concerned. She then went to Embury's house, who was her cousin, and told him what she saw, and what she had done, adding, with great earnestness: "Philip, you must preach to us, or we shall all go to hell, and God will require our blood at your hands!" Philip attempted a defense by saying, "How can I preach, as I have neither house nor congregation?" "Preach," said this noble woman, "in your own house, and to your own company." Before she left she prevailed on him to make the attempt, and within a few days Embury preached the first Methodist sermon in New York, in his own hired house, to a congregation of five persons, one of whom was Betty, the negro servant. Of course Paul Heck and Barbara were there.

"The humble cottage, with a single window in front," became too small, and an "upper room" was hired; and in 1767 this yielded to the more accommodating Rigging Loft—a room sixty by eighteen feet. Here Embury preached Sunday mornings at six o'clock, and Sunday evenings; and after a time, on Thursday evenings.

When this primitive church had been worshipping for about three months in the Rigging Loft, one Sunday evening a strange-looking military gentleman appeared among them. He was dressed as an officer, and had lost one of his eyes in a battle. He wore a green shade over the eye, and his appearance caused general excitement and inquiry. The fears of the little flock speedily gave place to joy on learning that he was a Methodist, who had been converted, under Wesley, at Bristol, three years before; that he was now barrack-master at Albany; and, best of all, that he was a local preacher, who would assist Embury in ministering the word of life. Captain Webb is a memorable figure in those days. He preached in his regimentals, his trusty sword lying on the desk, and drew vast crowds. His word was attended with uncommon power. "The sword of the Spirit was buried up to the hilt in the refuges of lies," and the Rigging Loft, Sunday after Sunday, resounded with the joyful notes of victory, and songs of praise to a pardoning God. Under his ministry, and that of Embury, multitudes found peace through believing, and the place became too strait for them.

A site was leased on John street in 1768, and purchased two years after. The people generally encouraged the enterprise, from the mayor to the poorest citizen. The subscription paper,

which is still preserved, contains the names of two hundred and fifty persons. Captain Webb stands first in amount, one hundred and fifty dollars. The chapel was built of stone, faced with blue plaster—sixty feet in length, forty-two in breadth. Dissenters were not yet allowed to erect “regular churches” in the city; the new building was therefore provided with “a fire-place and chimney” to avoid “the difficulty of the law.” It was called “The Wesley Chapel.” Embury superintended the work, and made the pulpit with his own hands, and then, October 30, 1768, got into it, and preached the dedication sermon. The opening sermon—just two years after the first sermon in his own house—was from Hosea x. 12: “Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.”

While the poor members, encouraged by the generous Captain, were yet hesitating over so vast an undertaking, Barbara Heck came forward, and told them that in praying about it these words “with unexpressible sweetness and power” were impressed on her mind: “I, the Lord, will do it.” Embury supplied the pulpit until the arrival of Wesley’s missionaries, when he left New York for the interior of the State, where he died in 1775.

Captain Webb planted Methodism in Philadelphia, and “felled trees” and formed classes in New Jersey and in other parts. He was liberal of means as well as zealous. Being placed on the retired list, with the pay of a captain, in view of his heroic service, he gave himself up to the itinerant work, and went abroad preaching. He corresponded with Wesley, urging the wants of America for laborers, and even stood before the Conference at Leeds (1772), pleading the cause, and brought away two missionaries—Rankin and Shadford. He asked for Joseph Benson, but could not prevail. The old soldier was a chosen vessel for the Northern and Middle colonies. Knowledge of Methodism in England, education, and position in society, gave him advantages which were well used in laying the foundations.

During one of the sessions of Congress, in Philadelphia, John Adams heard him, and describes him as “the old soldier, one of the most eloquent men I ever heard. He reaches the imagination and touches the passions very well; he expresses himself with great propriety.” A Methodist writer says: “They saw the warrior in his face, and heard the missionary in his voice; under



his holy eloquence they trembled, they wept, and fell down under his mighty word." He was a preacher of great earnestness. His ringing voice was heard in the Foundry, and Wesley writes: "I admire the wisdom of God in still raising up various preachers, according to the various tastes of men. The Captain is all life and fire; therefore, although he is not deep or regular, yet many, who would not hear a better preacher, flock to hear him, and many are convinced under his preaching." To the end of his days he was persuaded that a ministering spirit, a guardian angel, had, through Divine mercy, attended him all the way in his diversified pilgrimage. His long and useful life, closed where his spiritual life began—in Bristol. He contributed to building Portland Chapel, and in a vault beneath its communion-table he was buried. The venerable and valiant evangelist was laid to rest by "a crowded, weeping audience;" and the trustees erected a marble monument to his memory within its walls, pronouncing him "brave, active, courageous—faithful, zealous, successful—the principal instrument in erecting this chapel."

The first itinerant preacher who came over to the help of our cause in the New World was Robert Williams. "He was taken out to travel at the Conference of 1766, and his name is found in the Minutes of that year among the Irish appointments."\* One of his circuits took in Sligo, where he crossed the path, and doubtless saw the tracks, of Robert Strawbridge, whom he much resembled in impetuous usefulness, in boldness of pioneering, and in that spiritual instinct which goes ahead of ecclesiastical logic in solving questions as to what Israel ought to do. He had not an embarrassingly high respect for the Established Church and clergy, and this discounted him with Wesley, who makes a significant entry in his journal, shortly before Williams emigrated to America:

I rode over the Black Mountains to Manorhamilton. There was a general love to the gospel here till simple R. W. preached against the clergy. It is strange every one does not see: 1. The sinfulness of railing at the clergy; if they are blind leaders of the blind, then (says our Lord) "let them alone." 2. The foolishness of it. It can never do good, and has frequently done much harm.†

About March, 1769, tidings came of Embury's success, and

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\* Ireland and American Methodism, by W. Crook, D.D. This is our best authority on the subject. Most accounts of Robert Williams represent him as a local preacher, or lay evangelist. † Ibid.

Williams spoke to Wesley (who had had an urgent letter from New York), offering to go, and asking his sanction and authority. Wesley consented to his going, with the understanding that he was to "labor in subordination with the missionaries who were about to be sent out." Williams's impatient zeal panted for the moral conflict in the New World, and he resolved to be the first itinerant who appeared in America. He was poor, and had no way of paying his passage. Hearing that his friend Ashton was ready to sail, Williams hastily left Castlebar, sold his horse to pay his debts and pay his way to Dublin, and, carrying his saddle-bags on his arm, set off for the ship, with a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk. Ashton met him according to promise, and paid his passage. They arrived in New York in August, 1769, "two months at least" before Boardman and Pilmoor, the regular appointees. Robert Williams was "the apostle of Methodism" in Virginia and North Carolina, the spiritual father of Jesse Lee, who planted Methodism in New England, and of a multitude of converted souls who will bless God that ever he was born.

He took Embury's place in Wesley Chapel, and in connection with the other missionaries labored in New York and vicinity until 1771. The records of Old John Street Society show suggestive items of expenses incurred by the stewards—cash paid for a hat, a book, a trunk, a cloak, for "Mr. Williams;" but the principal item is for keeping his horse, showing that some circuit work and country excursions were connected with a city of twenty-two thousand inhabitants.

Naturally he would seek the companionship of Strawbridge, and with him, probably, he spent the fall and winter, laboring in connection with John King, another vigorous but irregular helper, lately come out; and under their ministry a good work began in Baltimore City and county, and in the adjoining country, the fruits of which remain to this day.

The date of his first appearance in Virginia is 1772. He landed at Norfolk early in the year, and at once opened his mission. He preached his first sermon at the door of the court-house. Standing on the steps, he began to sing. Attracted by the novel sound, the people gathered around and gazed on him with astonishment. The hymn finished, he kneeled and prayed. He then announced his text, and preached to a most disorderly crowd. A few listened, but most of them talked, laughed, and moved about in all directions. Nothing daunted, the sturdy missionary poured from a full heart the simple truths of the gospel. To the wondering multitude he was an enigma. Never had they heard the like.

"Sometimes," said they, "he would preach, then he would pray, then he would swear, and at times he would sing." Unaccustomed to hearing preachers freely use the words, "hell," "devil," etc., in their sermons, when he warned them of the danger of going to hell, of being damned forever, of dwelling with the devil and his angels, they declared he was swearing. "He is mad," was the verdict. Of course no house was opened to entertain a madman. He preached again. A few hearts were touched, and the stranger was fed and sheltered, not as mad, but as speaking the words of truth and soberness. The tree of Methodism was thus planted in an uncongenial soil, but, watered from on high, it struck its roots deep, and put forth goodly branches, bearing much fruit.\*

He returned a hundred members from Virginia to the first Annual Conference. Jarratt, the evangelical clergyman, wrote an account of "the work of God in these parts"—Sussex and Brunswick counties—and says:

It was chiefly carried on by the Methodists. The first of them that appeared there was Robert Williams, who was a plain, active, indefatigable preacher of the gospel. He was greatly blessed in detecting the hypocrite, razing false foundations, and stirring believers up to press after a present salvation from the remains of sin. He came to my house in the month of March, in the year 1773. The next year others of his brethren came, who gathered many Societies, both in this neighborhood and in other places as far as North Carolina. They now began to ride the circuit, and to take care of the Societies already formed, which were rendered a happy means both of deepening and spreading the work of God.

Williams formed the first circuit in Virginia.<sup>1</sup> A signal example of his usefulness was the conversion of Jesse Lee, whose parents opened their doors for him to preach. They were converted. Two of their sons became Methodist ministers, and their other children shared largely in the blessings of the gospel which he proclaimed with such holy ardor and success. Jesse Lee describes the man and his manner in days when the Toleration Act was not always a protection:

His manner of preaching was well calculated to awaken careless sinners, and to encourage penitent mourners. He spared no pains in order to do good. He frequently went to church to hear the Established clergy, and as soon as divine service was ended he would go out of the church, and standing on a stump, block, or log, began to sing, pray, and then preach to hundreds of people. It was common with him, after preaching, to ask most of the people some question about the welfare of their souls.

He was the first preacher in America that followed the example of Wesley in the circulation of tracts and books.<sup>1</sup> Jesse Lee tells us that he "reprinted many of Wesley's books and spread

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\*Bennett's Memorials of Methodism in Virginia.



them through the country." He issued Wesley's sermons in tract form, and circulated them freely with the happiest results. After marrying he ceased to travel as a regular itinerant. His home was about midway between Suffolk and Portsmouth. Here he died. For many years his grave was remembered and pointed out, but all trace of it has disappeared. "We look with peculiar feelings on him who stands first in a great cause." Robert Williams printed the first Methodist book in America, he was the first to marry, the first to locate, the first to die, and the first of that band of heroes who passed into the City of God.<sup>2</sup>

John King is the last of the memorable irregulars to be mentioned who took possession before the appointed missionaries came to America, and becoming naturalized, clave to the soil and to the people, and stood by the cause of Methodism when all but one of the regulars left the field.<sup>3</sup> There is a lesson here touching the theory of missionary success.<sup>4</sup> The impulse that draws or drives a man into such a field is a greater power and guarantee against failure than any fund or association standing at his back.<sup>5</sup> John King was a strong character, and did service at a time when such men only make themselves heard. He was born in England, in 1746—the youngest of three sons. He had studied at Oxford University, and in a London medical college. Whether he ever graduated, we do not know. He heard John Wesley preach, and was converted. His father's family bitterly opposed the Methodist movement. Finally he was disinherited. It was the old story. The love for Jesus waxed all the warmer in his heart when he felt that he was "persecuted for righteousness' sake." So far from recanting his faith, he was now impressed with the conviction that he must preach. He went to Wesley and opened his heart to him, and that decided his course. We next find him in Philadelphia, in the latter part of 1769, burdened with the conviction, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!" He offered himself to the Society for license, but they hesitated. However, he determined to preach, and made an appointment "in the potter's field." He proclaimed his first message in that humblest of sanctuaries, over the graves of the poor, and thus began a career of eminent usefulness. Some of his Methodist brethren heard him, and he was licensed, and next appears in Wilmington, Del., "among a few people who were there earnestly seeking the Lord." In Maryland, Strawbridge

greeted him with hearty welcome, and they wrought zealously together in Baltimore county. King was a man of invincible zeal. On his first visit to Harford county, in 1769, before he began religious services in a large congregation, he stood some time in silent prayer, covering his face with his hands. The spectacle struck the attention of a young man with such effect that he was awakened, and was soon after converted under the ministry of the stranger. (King was the first Methodist to preach in the city of Baltimore.) Here he preached his first sermon from a "blacksmith's block, at the corner of French and Broad streets," his next from "a table at the junction of Baltimore and Calvert streets." Five years afterward Methodism was strong enough there to entertain an Annual Conference, and (Baltimore ever since has sat as queen among Methodist cities.) His street-preaching procured him an invitation that was not repeated—to preach in St. Paul's Church. He "made the dust fly from the old velvet cushion." Wesley, who knew him in England, corresponded with him in America; he calls him "stubborn and headstrong." One of Wesley's letters to him conveys so good a lesson that it may be quoted for the benefit of all public speakers, and especially for the benefit of earnest young preachers:

My dear brother, always take advice or reproof as a favor; it is the surest mark of love. I advised you once and you took it as an affront; nevertheless I will do it once more. Scream no more at the peril of your soul. God now warns you by me, whom he has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can, but do not scream. Speak with all your heart, but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, "He shall not cry;" the word properly means, he shall not *scream*. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud, often vehemently, but I never scream. I never strain myself; I dare not; I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul. Perhaps one reason why that good man, Thomas Walsh, yea, and John Manners too, were in such grievous darkness before they died, was because they shortened their own lives. O John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper. By nature you are very far from it; you are stubborn and headstrong. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit.

John King's name appears among the ten in the first printed Minutes who made up the first Annual Conference in America, and from it he was sent to New Jersey; next year to Norfolk; and next year he married in Brunswick county, Va., and soon after located. The Church prospered and enlarged where John King labored. After locating he bought a home in Franklin county, N. C., near the present county-seat, Louis-

burg, where he lived until 1789 or 1790, when he removed to Wake county, about ten miles west of Raleigh. At the Annual Conference of 1777 he was appointed, with John Dickens, LeRoy Cole, and Edward Pride, to North Carolina Circuit. This was the second year of the existence of a circuit in that State. At the close of the year they reported nine hundred and thirty members. Carolina Circuit the year before had reported six hundred and eighty-three members in Society; so that, notwithstanding the war, there had been an increase of two hundred and forty-seven. King's name does not appear on the printed Minutes after this year. He practiced medicine to support his family, and served the Church as a local preacher. Bishop Asbury makes frequent and honorable mention of him in his journal; and there is abundant evidence that he continued to the end an earnest, fearless, faithful preacher of the gospel, and his house was a favorite stopping-place with the old Bishop. King was present at the first Methodist Conference in North Carolina, convened at Green Hill's, in Franklin county, one mile south of the town of Louisburg, April 20, 1785. Coke and Asbury presided. There is a family tradition that as he entered the room in which the Conference had assembled, Dr. Coke, without a word of salutation, called upon him to pray. Laying aside his saddlebags, he began his petition. He died while on a visit to New Berne, in 1794, and was buried at his home in Wake county. His children—six in number—were all members of the Methodist Church. Two of his sons, John and William, were Methodist preachers.\*

Robert Strawbridge, both in order of time and talent and service, stands at the head of the noble "irregulars" who founded Arminian Methodism in America.) Embury is worthy of much honor, but the builder of the Log Meeting-house of more. They were contemporaneous in arrival, but not in labor. Embury was a gentle spirit, modest and diffident. His candle was hid under a bushel for six years, and might have staid there

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\* These facts concerning John King are taken from "Sketches of the Pioneers of Methodism in North Carolina," by the Rev. M. H. Moore (1884), who had access to family records. The descendants of John King are worthily represented in the Methodist ministry and laity of Kentucky and Tennessee to this day. The first Treasurer of Vanderbilt University, Dempsey Weaver, Esq., was connected with a branch of the family.



had not Barbara Heck taken it off, and compelled his feeble but pure light to shine. His active period in New York extended through three years, when he removed from the city. Not so with Strawbridge: bold, prompt, zealous, he opened his house for preaching so soon as he had a house, and went to saving souls; and this employment he continued for twenty-one years. At his death, in 1781, Societies had been formed in three States, and a strong band of preachers had been raised up, who were going all abroad with the glorious tidings.

The Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, giving a "brief account of the rise of Methodism" in their preface to the Discipline, in 1790, after alluding to the labors of Embury, in a way that possibly intimates precedence, say that "about the same time Robert Strawbridge, a local preacher from Ireland, settled in Frederick county, in the State of Maryland, and preaching there, formed some Societies." They further add that "the first Methodist church was built in New York in 1768 or 1769." The matter of fact involved was perhaps not considered of much importance, and an error as to the precedence of the two men in forming Societies and building churches might easily be made at the time this scrap of history was written. Sam's Creek, in Maryland, was not so conspicuous as John Street, in New York, nor so often visited. The weakness and wants of the latter gave it a place in history when an appeal was made to the British Conference for men and money to help pay it out and to preach. The Log Meeting-house rejoiced in freedom from debt, and the fruitful ministry of its pastor had surrounded him with helpers better adapted to the field than any he would be likely to obtain abroad. Philip Gatch, William Watters, Owen, Durbin, Freeborn Garretson, and Haggerty—brought forward directly or indirectly by Strawbridge's ministry—left him and his people under no necessity of sending across the sea for men or money. The very success of the Maryland planting of Methodism has caused it to be obscured in early records. By a most respectable authority the following sentence is cast into the scale of public opinion against the historic claim of the Log Meeting-house: "This building, however, though sometimes spoken of as the first Methodist church in Maryland, was never deeded to the Church, and was never finished."\* Of course, if not the first in

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\* Simpson's Cyclopaedia of Methodism: Article, "Strawbridge."

Maryland, it cannot be the first in America, and that settles the claim of priority in favor of New York. But it might be asked, When is a log meeting-house "finished?" This one served the people, and multitudes heard the word of God, and were quickened and saved. One shop was not "finished" like the other, but the work turned out is the proper test in comparing the two. A bold spring gushing up from amid rough rocks is better for a water-supply than the trickling drops from a polished marble font. As for its never being "deeded to the Church," it is enough to say, lots on John street were more valuable than lots on Sam's Creek. There was no danger of losing the Log Meeting-house. No contest for title has ever been heard of.

Another author, who evidently is inclined to declare the weight of historic testimony to be in favor of the priority of the Log Meeting-house, explains the strange fact that nearly all the books put Embury and John Street before Strawbridge and Sam's Creek: the case was not beyond controversy, and the uncertainty was overcome "by balancing the importance of one event against the priority of another."\*

Even if this unusual canon of historical research be accepted, by every token the Strawbridge church comes to the front. If any notable preacher or layman was developed in the first generation from what it has become popular to style the "cradle of American Methodism" (John Street), history fails to record the name. But says an eminent historian: "Several preachers were rapidly raised up by Strawbridge in his travels in Baltimore and Harford counties; Sater Stephenson, Nathan Perigo, Richard Webster, and others; and many laymen, whose families have been identified with the whole subsequent progress of Methodism in their respective localities, if not in the nation generally."† And the Log Meeting-house was the beginning, 1764.

The Minutes of the first Conference (1773) show one thousand one hundred and sixty members—the whole numerical strength of Methodism in America;‡ and of these five hundred are in Maryland, one hundred in Virginia, and one hundred and eighty in New York. ¶ In 1784, at the organization of Episcopal

\* Daniel's Illustrated History of Methodism, page 377. The Northern Division of Episcopal Methodism celebrated 1866 as the centenary of the first Society and first sermon; but the Southern division took no part in the celebration.

† Dr. Stevens's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Vol. I.

Methodism, more than four-fifths of the fourteen thousand nine hundred and eighty-three members were in Maryland and south of Maryland. The prophecy of Israel upon Joseph has been fulfilled in the history of the work begun by Strawbridge: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall; the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."\*

Freeborn Garretson relates his first interview with Strawbridge, showing that he was strong elsewhere as well as in the pulpit. He knew how to make the fireside profitable:

He came to the house of a gentleman near where I lived to stay all night. I had never heard him preach; but as I had a great desire to be in company with a person who had caused so much talk in the country, I went over and sat and heard him converse until nearly midnight; and when I retired it was with these thoughts—I have never spent a few hours so agreeably in my life. He spent most of the time in explaining Scripture, and in giving interesting anecdotes; and perhaps one of them will do to relate here: A congregation came together in a certain place, and a gentleman who was hearing thought that the preacher had directed his whole sermon to him, and he retired home after the sermon in disgust. However, he concluded to hear him once more, and hide himself behind the people, so that the preacher should not see him; it was the old story—his character was delineated. He retired dejected; but concluded that possibly the preacher saw him, and said, "I will try him once more;" he did so, and hid himself behind the door. The preacher took for his text, "And a man shall be as a hiding-place," etc. In the midst of the sermon, the preacher cried out, "Sinner, come from your scouting-hole!" The poor fellow came forward, looked the preacher in the face, and said, "You are a wizard, and the devil is in you; I will hear you no more."

The original log-house gave way to a better-built one, three miles south-east, on Pipe Creek; the substitute or successor was called Poulson Chapel, built in 1783. Of all the costly temples built for the worship of God, since that day, by the Methodists, none may compare with that original, of log walls and board cover and puncheon seats. And yet, if they had continued in it after they were able to build better, the blessing of God would

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\* In 1784 the total number of Methodists in the United States, except itinerants, was 14,983, of whom 13,331 were in the Southern States; and of the 65 chapels built, 56 were in the Southern States. In 1800 the total number was 63,958, of whom 45,282 were in the Southern States. In 1812 the total number was 195,357, with 122,561 in the Southern States. In 1820 the total number was 260,275, and of these 133,004 were in the Southern States.



not have continued with them. In 1800 the stone church now standing took the place of Poulson Chapel.\* Here, in 1801, Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat held a Conference. Not a few of the pioneer settlers were alive, and Asbury had means of correct information on local history. We quote from his journal (Vol. III., page 27):

April 29. Wednesday we had a large assembly at Goshen meeting-house. Brother Whatcoat preached. We came on that evening to Levin Warfield's.

Thursday, 30. We arrived to dine at Alexander Warfield's, on Sam's Creek, and pushed on to Henry Willis's on Pipe Creek, where it had been our intention to open Conference. We had about forty members present, and sat on Friday, Saturday, and Monday. On Tuesday morning we rose. Our own people and our friends in the settlement were equally kind; and we had rich entertainment. This settlement of Pipe Creek is the richest in the State; here Mr. Strawbridge formed the first Society in Maryland—and America.

The Italics are his own, and have the meaning of a man who, sure of his information, would put a doubtful question to rest.

It is noteworthy that three of the heroic men who were first in the history of American Methodism, had the usual overflow of action and enterprise which brought their successors, representing the reign of law and order, into conflict with them. King was stentorian, and had a will of his own that put Wesley in doubt of him. It required all that force for his triumphant march over the difficulties he met, and in meeting which he made a glorious record. Of the six "rules agreed to by all the preachers present" at the first Conference (1773), Thomas Rankin presiding, two were leveled at Williams and two at Strawbridge. Indeed, about half of the business done, besides stationing the ten preachers, was in restraining the two grand and impetuous men, by whom

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\* "A house which has figured largely in the establishment and perpetuation of Methodism, now called the Stone Chapel, where I have often worshiped in my youthful days;" so says our informant (C. A. W.), a son of Alexander Warfield. Rev. Wm. Hamilton, D.D., whose district embraced the Stone Chapel, and who had the best means of gathering information, in an article in the *Methodist Quarterly Review*, July, 1856, fixes the date of Strawbridge's arrival at Sam's Creek about 1759 or 1760, and the building of the log chapel, 1764. Dr. Geo. C. M. Roberts, of Baltimore, has collected information to the same effect. There is evidence that Henry Maynard (born in 1757) was baptized "about four or five years old" by Strawbridge, at the house of John Maynard, his father, one of Strawbridge's preaching-places.

more than half of the work up to date had been performed. The rules that have Williams in view read thus:

4. None of the preachers in America to reprint any of Mr. Wesley's books, without his authority (when it can be gotten) and the consent of their brethren.

5. Robert Williams to sell the books he has already printed, but to print no more unless under the above restrictions.

What had he done? One of the best things possible for him or any other man at the time to do. The best historian of that day, Jesse Lee, says: "Previous to the formation of this rule, Robert Williams had reprinted many of Mr. Wesley's books, and had spread them through the country, to the great advantage of religion. The sermons, which he printed in small pamphlets, had a very good effect, and gave the people great light and understanding in the nature of the new birth and in the plan of salvation; and, withal, they opened the way in many places for our preachers to be invited to preach where they had never been before."

When Asbury first heard of Williams's publishing enterprise he "was somewhat troubled;" he feared that it had been done "for the sake of gain," and remarks in his journal: "This will not do. It does by no means look well." He wrote to Wesley on the subject, who, in reply, "enjoined that R. W. might not print any more books without his consent."

This is that same R. W. who had worried Wesley in Ireland by preaching against the clergy, and whom he permitted to come to the American field, but would not send him. Irrepressible genius, who, having started with his saddle-bags and a bottle of milk, was now doing what would have been worthy of incorporated capital to undertake. The matter came before the Conference, and Williams shared the fate of the inventor of the steam locomotive some years later. In recording his death, Asbury puts in his discounting fear as well as his truthful eulogy. It is a singular record in his journal (Vol. I., page 12):

June 26 [1775]. Brother W. died. The Lord does all things well; perhaps Brother W. was in danger of being entangled in worldly business, and might thereby have injured the cause of God. So he was taken away from the evil to come.

Thursday 28. I ventured to preach a funeral-sermon at the burial of Brother W. He has been a very useful, laborious man, and the Lord gave him many seals to his ministry. Perhaps no one in America has been an instrument of awakening so many souls as God has awakened by him.

Men are seldom wise above their age. Asbury and the Conference feared that even in printing such tracts and books the greed of gain and of getting rich might creep in among them. This restraint on publishing books by itinerant ministers, without the concurrence of their brethren, long survived in the Discipline, because by the improper publications of accredited ministers the Church was involved, in popular estimation, and discredited. Besides, the connectional principle and economy were in view, out of which grew the Book Concern. But when that undiscovered grave is found in which "R. W." sleeps, no monument that can be raised over it will be too high or too honorable.

The other two rules, which look to Strawbridge, are:

1. Every preacher who acts in connection with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labor in America is strictly to avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.
2. All the people among whom we labor to be earnestly exhorted to attend the church, and to receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people in Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute.

Why single out these two States? Strawbridge's sturdy independence, as well as his flaming evangelism, was felt there. The high-souled Irishman did not entertain the current English deference for the State-church. The Lord had called him to preach, and had owned and honored his ministry by the conversion of souls, and he could not see it to be his duty to send them to card-playing and dram-drinking parsons in order to have their children baptized, and to receive the Lord's Supper—parsons whose only claim to superiority was that the hands of an English bishop had been on their heads. In the Log Meeting-house and elsewhere he gave the sacraments to the people whom the Lord had given to him, and baptized their children. To an order or rule regulating among the American Methodist ministry the administration of the ordinances, defining who should and who should not be authorized to administer, and laying down the laws of ministerial gradation and promotion, Strawbridge would doubtless have bowed; but he felt under no obligation to that general self-denying ordinance which English Methodists had imposed on themselves. There is a note in Asbury's journal to the following effect: "That no preacher in our Connection shall be permitted to administer the ordinances, except Mr. Strawbridge, and he under the particular direction of the assistant" (Rankin).



"A concession so singular," says Dr. Abel Stevens, "shows the extraordinary consideration in which Strawbridge was held, the influence he had obtained over the Societies in Maryland and Virginia; perhaps also the conscious necessity of the independent administration of the sacraments in that chief field of the denomination." But great as was this concession, it did not meet Strawbridge's view. Asbury says: "I read a part of our Minutes, to see if Brother Strawbridge would conform, but he appeared to be inflexible."

Asbury's prejudice against Strawbridge for his Hibernian independence in the sacramental controversy continued to the last. "He is no more!" lamented the good Asbury; "he is no more; upon the whole I am inclined to think the Lord took him away in judgment, because he was in a way to do hurt to his cause, and that he saved him in mercy, because from his death-bed conversation he appears to have had hope in his end." Richard Owen, who knew him better, had no doubt about his end. He proclaimed over the coffin: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

We find his name in the Minutes of 1773 and of 1775; then it disappears, without note or comment. 'Probably he could not bear the rule of Boardman, Asbury, and Rankin, who in turn were Superintendents; conscious as he was of the greatness of his mission, and seeing no future for Methodism on the line of policy, touching the ordinances, represented by them. There is no doubt that the influence which went out from Strawbridge hastened the action of Wesley, and strengthened him as to its necessity, when regular and satisfactory provision was at length made for organizing the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

Strawbridge was impatient; he could not wait, for he saw no prospect of relief on the English plan. In his last days he was provided for. An opulent and generous citizen of Baltimore county, who admired his character and sympathized with his poverty, gave him a farm free of rent for life. It was while residing here, "under the shadow of Hampton," his benefactor's mansion, that in "one of his visiting rounds to his spiritual children he was taken sick, and died in great peace." Richard Owen preached his funeral-sermon in the open air, to a

great throng, "under a tree at the north-west corner of the house.' The hymn is preserved which they sang as they laid the noble emigrant from the banks of the Shannon to sleep:

How blest is our brother, bereft  
Of all that could burden his mind!  
How easy the soul that has left  
The wearisome body behind!

The historian of the event adds: "His grave and also the grave of Mrs. Strawbridge are in the small burying-ground in the orchard, south of the house perhaps some hundred yards. The graves are together, about the center of the ground, and as if nature were reproving the neglect of the Church, she has raised up a large poplar-tree between them as a *living* monument of their worth. Standing on the spot, and looking southward a distance of six or seven miles, the eye rests on Baltimore."

## CHAPTER XXII.

The New Circuit—Eight Missionaries Sent to It—What Became of Them—The War—Asbury Alone Left—The two Blunders—Wesley's Calm Address.

A NEW circuit appears on the list at the Twenty-seventh Annual Conference, held in London, 1770: "No. 50—America." The Western Continent stands there in the Minutes as one circuit; and the preachers are Boardman and Pilmoor, who having gone out since the last session, had sent back a good report. They landed at Philadelphia after a nine weeks' voyage, and entered at once upon their business. Pilmoor was educated at Kingswood School, and had been in the itinerancy four years. Soon after his arrival, he wrote to Wesley:

We were not a little surprised to find Captain Webb in town, and a society of about a hundred members, who desire to be in close connection with you. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. I have preached several times, and the people flock to hear in multitudes. Sunday night I went out upon the common. I had the stage appointed for the horse-race for my pulpit, and I think between four and five thousand hearers, who heard with attention still as night. Blessed be God for field-preaching! When I began to talk of preaching at five o'clock in the morning, the people thought it would not answer in America; however, I resolved to try, and had a very good congregation.

Whitefield had been along there, and the people were used to field-preaching; and the reproach of Methodism had in a measure been taken away. Boardman was an amiable and holy man, and he, too, found the way partially prepared for him. Leaving his colleague to serve Philadelphia, he went to New York, and thence reported to head-quarters:

Coming to a large town on my way, and seeing a barrack, I asked a soldier if there were any Methodists belonging to it. "O yes," said he, "we are all Methodists; that is, we should all be glad to hear a Methodist preach." "Well," said I, "tell them in the barrack that a Methodist preacher, just come from England, intends to preach here to-night." He did so; and the inn was soon surrounded with soldiers. I asked, "Where do you think I can get a place to preach in?" (it being then dark). One of them said, "I will go and see if I can get the Presbyterian meeting-house." He did so; and soon returned to tell me he had prevailed, and that the bell was just going to ring to let all the town know. A great company soon got together, and seemed much affected.

Between these two cities the missionaries spent their time, frequently interchanging. "Brother Boardman and I," writes Pil-



moor, "are chiefly confined to the cities, and therefore cannot, at present, go much into the country, as we have more work upon our hands than we are able to perform."

In the fall of 1771, Asbury and Wright arrived and were joyfully received. A year later, Asbury was appointed Wesley's "General Assistant" in America, in place of Boardman. In June, 1773, Thomas Rankin and George Shadford came under convoy of Captain Webb. The former having seen more service, and coming fresh from the British Conference, with instructions for carrying on the work, superseded Asbury in office. Late in 1774 other laborers were added, Martin Rodda and James Dempster, whose story is soon told.

Thus had the American Circuit been supplied, in the course of six years, with eight preachers, drawn from the mother Conference. The war between the Colonies and the mother country, put an end to further supplies from that quarter; and it was nine years before such intercourse was resumed. How these men acquitted themselves, and how the cause prospered under them and others who were raised up to help them, will be considered.

As is generally the case, mistakes occurred in the choice of some of the missionaries. The best are not always to be had for a distant and difficult field; and the actual situation may develop an unfitness that no sagacity of the appointing power can foresee. The irregulars who preceded them, "on their own account," were lively, full of resources, and not easily daunted by dangers and difficulties. But at least half of the eight sent over in the regular way did not turn out to be "chosen vessels." The law of natural and spiritual selection is a mystery that eludes the wisest. If out of the family of Jesse, with eight sons, we get one David—it is well. If one Asbury or one Shadford is found in all who crossed and recrossed the Atlantic to evangelize America, the outlay is well repaid, and we ought to be thankful.

Dempster, a native of Edinburgh, was educated at that university. He was, like Rankin, one of the few Scotchmen who found their way into a Methodist Conference. Wesley never had much success in Scotland. He found "the generality of the people so wise that they needed no more knowledge, and so good that they + needed no more religion;" a people, "the greatest part of whom hear much, know every thing, and feel nothing." Now and then he got a preacher from among them, and such was James Demp-

ster, who had been ten years an itinerant. Soon after coming to America, he connected himself with the Presbyterians, and lived and died with them. One of his sons became an eminent Methodist minister.\* In less than two years Rodda fled the country, because, as a royalist, he engaged in spreading the king's proclamation through his circuit in Delaware. Aided by slaves, he escaped to the British fleet, and returned. His conduct was a cause of trouble to his brethren who were left behind him, both preachers and people. He continued in the itinerancy in England three or four years, and then no more is seen of him.

Wright, after spending a year or two in the Southern provinces—part of the time in Norfolk—early in the year 1774 returned to England, by the advice of his brethren. After his return he continued in the Wesleyan itinerancy a few years, and then desisted from traveling. Boardman's letter from New York shows the spirit in which he prosecuted his work:

It pleases God to carry on his work amongst us. Within this month we have had a great awakening here. Many begin to believe the report, and to some the arm of the Lord is revealed. This last month we have had near thirty added to the Society, five of whom have received a clear sense of the pardoning love of God. We have in this city some of the best preachers (both in the English and Dutch churches) that are in America. Yet God works by whom he will work. I have lately been comforted by the death of some poor negroes, who have gone off the stage of time rejoicing in the God of their salvation.

The war approaching, he and his colleague left in 1774; and we trace his continued history in the Minutes for eight years, when the first American "Assistant" died suddenly in Ireland, and was carried by devout men of Cork, with mourning, to his burial. Pilmoor's subsequent career was checkered. Wesley failed to name him as one of the legal hundred in the "Deed of Declaration" registered in 1784; and in making up an episcopal government for America did not call for his services. He quit the Connection, returned to America, took orders in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and was rector of a church in New York, and later in Philadelphia. He became a Doctor of Divinity, had a love for Methodism to the last, and to the end of his long life subscribed to the Old Preachers' Fund. At the Conference of 1804, in John Street Church, says Wakely, a tall, dignified old gentleman came into the house, and walked to where Bishop Asbury was sitting. Asbury arose, shook hands with him, and then, in

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\* Dr. Dempster, who founded Biblical schools in Concord and in Evanston.

his own way, said, as he introduced him to the Conference, "This is Brother Pilmoor, who used to preach in this pulpit under the direction of Mr. Wesley." Pilmoor seemed a little embarrassed, and bowed respectfully, paid his annual subscription to the Preachers' Fund, and retired. It was a pity he left the Church of his early choice, as he had the heart and soul of a Methodist preacher, and much of the fire of the primitive itinerancy. The evangelical spirit produced through his instrumentality in the congregations over which he presided, and a correspondent attention to some of the peculiar means of grace which he introduced among them, continued to manifest themselves for a number of years after his death.

Thomas Rankin was a native of Dunbar. He had spent much time as the traveling companion of Wesley, and therefore came to America well acquainted with the doctrine and discipline which were to be taught and enforced. His awakening and conversion recalls the fact that, in the marching and countermarching of armies, primitive Methodism was spread by converted soldiers. Thus was it planted at Gibraltar and other points on the Continent. Rankin's experience is connected with this strange means of gospel propagandism:

A troop of dragoons came to Dunbar; among whom were ten or twelve pious men. As soon as they were settled in the place, they hired a room, and met together for prayer and hearing the word of God every morning and evening. I did not know then, but I have been informed since, that those men were part of the religious soldiers who used to meet with John Haime (the Methodist lay preacher) and others, in Germany. The news of soldiers meeting for prayer and praise, and reading the word of God, soon spread through the town; curiosity led many to attend their meetings, and I was one of that number. It pleased God to carry on the work of his grace in the souls of those in whom it was begun, and their number increased; so that a Society was formed, and class-meetings were established. At that time I did not understand the nature of class-meetings; and therefore was ready to listen to the foolish talking of those who said, "The soldiers had pardoned such and such a one, after they had confessed their sins to them."

He was now in condition to listen to an ambassador of God, whom hitherto, through prejudice, he had declined to hear. "It was about this time that I first heard that eminent servant of the Lord Jesus, Mr. George Whitefield. He was preaching his farewell sermon in the Orphan-house yard, in Edinburgh. I had often before had thoughts of hearing him, but so many things had been said to me of him that I was afraid I should be de-



ceived. I heard him with wonder and surprise, and had such a discovery of the plan of salvation as I had never known before. I remembered more of that sermon than of all the sermons I ever had heard; and had a discovery of the unsearchable riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, as also how a lost sinner was to come to God, and obtain mercy through the Redeemer." How he reached a clear conversion, he shall tell:

It was suggested to me: "Probably you are not one of the elect; and you may seek, and seek in vain." I tasted no pleasant food, my sleep departed from me, and my flesh wasted from my bones; till at last I sunk into despair. One morning I went into the garden, and sat down in a retired place, to mourn over my sad condition. I began to wrestle with God in an agony of prayer. I called out: "Lord, I have wrestled long, and have not yet prevailed; O let me now prevail!" The whole passage of Jacob's wrestling with the angel came into my mind; and I called out aloud, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me!" In a moment the cloud burst, and tears of love flowed from my eyes; when these words were applied to my soul, many times over, "And he blessed him there." They came with the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance; and my whole soul was overwhelmed with the presence of God. Every doubt of my acceptance was now gone, and all my fears fled away as the morning shades before the rising sun. I had the most distinct testimony that all my sins were forgiven through the blood of the covenant, and that I was a child of God, and an heir of eternal glory.

An interview of Thomas Rankin with Wesley ended by his sending him to a circuit to try him, and soon his call to preach was as clear to him as his conversion. Rankin came to America to set things in order, and to him belongs the distinction of convening and presiding over the first Annual Conference.\* The work of stationing the preachers and regulating the Societies had heretofore been done at Quarterly Conferences. He was not equal to the man whom he superseded at any point except it be that of personal piety. The largeness of things in the Old World made him unable to appreciate the day of small things in the New. His journal constantly reveals disappointment:

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, we had our first little Conference. There were present seven preachers, besides Brothers Boardman and Pilmoor, who were to return to England. The amount of all the members in the different Societies did not exceed one thousand one hundred and sixty. From the wonderful accounts I had heard in England, and during our passage, I was led to think there

\*The list of appointments of the Conference held in Philadelpha, July 14, 1773: "New York, Thomas Rankin (to change in four months); Philadelphia, George Shadford (to change in four months); New Jersey, John King, William Watters; Baltimore, Francis Asbury, Robert Strawbridge, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Yearbry; Norfolk, Richard Wright; Petersburg, Robert Williams.

must be some thousands awakened, and joined as members of our Societies; but I was now convinced of the real truth. Some of the above number I also found, afterward, were not closely united to us. Indeed, our discipline was not properly attended to, except at Philadelphia and New York; and even in those places it was upon a decline.

Next year the Annual Conference again met in Philadelphia: "May 25 [1774].—Our little Conference began, and ended on Friday, the 27th. We proceeded in all things on the same plan as in England, which our Minutes will declare. Every thing considered, we had reason to bless God for what he had done in about ten months. Above a thousand members are added to the Societies, and most of these have found peace with God. We had now more than seventeen preachers."

And next year, we have a similar entry: "May 16.—The preachers came together from their different circuits, and next day we began our little Conference. We wanted all the advice and light we could obtain, respecting our conduct in the present critical situation of affairs. We had abundant reason to bless God for the increase of his work last year. We had above a thousand added to the different Societies, and they had increased to ten circuits. Our joy in God would have been abundantly more, had it not been for the preparations of war that now rung throughout this city [Philadelphia]."

Nothing seemed to come up to his expectations, but our rivers: "The River Delaware, and Hudson's River, as well as the Susquehanna, are grand sights. If I had not crossed several large rivers before, I should have been surprised in crossing the Susquehanna. Where we crossed, I believe it was eight times broader than the River Thames at London bridge."

Stationed in New York and Philadelphia, he faithfully kept up the custom of preaching early in the morning of Sunday and in the evening, and attending "church" at midday, for hearing and receiving: "Sunday 26.—I preached in the morning at seven, and in the evening at the usual time. I found more liberty in the morning than I expected. After breakfast I went to St. Paul's, as I always have done, to public worship."

Like entries may be found in the journal of Asbury. When he was in New York, he says: "Lord's-day, 13.—I preached this morning to a considerable number of people. Mr. R. found his spirits raised, and was much comforted. In the afternoon Mr.

R[ankin], Captain W[ebb], and myself, went to St. Paul's Church, and received the sacrament. At night Mr. R. dispensed the word of truth with power. It reached the hearts of many, and they appeared to be much quickened."

When Rankin informed Asbury by letter of his purpose to return to England, the latter records his own purpose:

But I can by no means agree to leave such a field for gathering souls to Christ as we have in America. It would be an eternal dishonor to the Methodists, that we should all leave three thousand souls, who desire to commit themselves to our care; neither is it the part of a good shepherd to leave his flock in time of danger; therefore, I am determined, by the grace of God, not to leave them, let the consequence be what it may. Our friends here appear to be distressed above measure at the thoughts of being forsaken by the preachers. So I wrote my sentiments both to Mr. T. R. and Mr. G. S.

George Shadford was to Asbury as Jonathan to David. "So we are left alone," he writes to G. S., after Rankin sailed in 1777. T. R. was useful in the London and other circuits, and died at a good old age, peacefully and with the love of his brethren. There are evidences in Wesley's correspondence that T. R. had made representations to him not favorable to Asbury; indeed his recall from the American field had once been definitely determined on as the result. By losing Rankin, Asbury was saved to the new Republic which was struggling into existence. It was Asbury's misfortune as long as Wesley lived to be misrepresented to him by weak but well-meaning men whom he overshadowed, or by designing men whom he overruled. To the credit of Wesley's sagacity, notwithstanding the difficulty of obtaining correct information, "honest Francis Asbury" stood at the top with him, to the last.

George Shadford was born in Lincolnshire, 1739. His mother insisted on his saying his prayers every night and morning, at least; and sent him to be catechised by the minister every Sunday. At fourteen years of age his parents sent him to the bishop to be confirmed; and at sixteen they desired him to prepare to receive the sacrament. "For about a month before it," he says, "I retired from all vain company, prayed, and read alone; while the Spirit of God set home what I read to my heart. I wept much in secret, was ashamed of my past life, and thought I would never spend my time on Sundays as I had done. When I approached the table of the Lord, it appeared so awful to me that I was likely to fall down, as if I was going to the judgment-



seat of Christ. However, very soon my heart was melted down like wax before the fire. These good impressions continued about three months. So that I verily believe, had I been acquainted with the Methodists at that time, I should have soon found remission of sins, and peace with God. But I had not a single companion that feared God; all were light and trifling. Having none to guide or direct me, the devil soon persuaded me to take more liberty; and suggested that I had repented and reformed enough; that there was no need to be always so precise." He joined the militia, and, between the strivings of the Spirit and the wickedness of the camp, became very miserable:

I was often tempted this year to put an end to my life; for it was a year of sinning, and a year of misery. I was afraid to stand by a deep river, lest I should throw myself in. If I was on the edge of a great rock, I trembled, and thought I must cast myself down, and therefore was obliged to retreat suddenly. When I have been in the front gallery at church, I have many times been forced to withdraw backward, being horribly tempted to cast myself down headlong. It seemed as if Satan was permitted to wreak his malice upon me in an uncommon manner; but I was wonderfully preserved by an invisible hand, in the midst of such dreadful temptations. At other times, when at prayer, or walking alone meditating, God hath graciously given me to taste of the powers of the world to come.

Near the military encampment, the Methodists held an outdoor service; and without any good design, he and his companions went to see and hear:

I was much struck with his manner. He took out his hymn-book, and the people sung a hymn. After this he began to pray extempore in such a manner as I had never been used to. I thought it to be a most excellent prayer. After this he took his little Bible out of his pocket, read over his text, and put it into his pocket again. I marveled at this, and thought within myself, "Will he preach without a book too?" He began immediately to open the Scriptures; and compared spiritual things with spiritual, in such a light as I had never heard before. I did not suppose that he had studied either at Oxford or Cambridge; but something struck me, "This is the gift of God; this is the gift of God." The preacher spoke much against drunkenness, swearing, etc.; but I thought I was not much guilty of such sins. At last he spoke very closely against pleasure-takers, and proved that such were dead while they live. I thought, "If what he says be true, I am in a most dreadful condition." I thought again, "This must be true; for he proves it from the word of God." Immediately I found a kind of judgment-seat set up in my conscience, where I was tried, cast, and condemned; for I knew I had been seeking happiness in the pleasures of the world all my days, not in the Creator and Redeemer of my soul. I revolved over and over what I had heard, as I went from the preaching; and resolved, "If this be Methodist preaching, I will come again;" for I received more light from that single sermon than from all I ever heard in my life before.

When his enlistment as a soldier expired he returned home. "I have looked upon it as a kind providence that brought a Methodist farmer to the place of my nativity, while I was absent in the militia, who received the Methodist preachers, and had formed a little Society just ready for me when I got home." His conversion soon followed, for the farmer, one Sunday, gave notice as the people were leaving the "church," where the "minister" had discoursed, that a Methodist would preach in a meeting-house that evening, and Shadford went.

We had a full house, and several were greatly affected while he published his crucified Master. Toward the latter part of the sermon I trembled; I shook; I wept. I thought: "I cannot stand it; I shall fall down amidst all this people." O how gladly would I have been alone to weep! for I was tempted with shame. I stood guilty and condemned, like the publican in the temple. I cried out (so that others might hear, being pierced to the heart with the sword of the Spirit), "God be merciful to me a sinner!" No sooner had I expressed these words, but by the eye of faith (not with my bodily eyes) I saw Christ, my Advocate, at the right-hand of God, making intercession for me. I believed he loved me, and gave himself for me. The Lord filled my soul with divine love, as quick as lightning; so suddenly did the Lord, whom I sought, come to his temple. Immediately my eyes flowed with tears, and my heart with love. Tears of joy and sorrow ran mingled down my cheeks. O what sweet distress was this! I seemed as if I could weep my life away in tears of love.

Class-meeting led him out into social and public prayer, and soon he was an exhorter, trying to bring souls to Christ. But his greatest concern was for his father and mother, sister and brother, all strangers to God. He prayed for them, and must pray with them. "One night," says he, "I took courage to speak to them, in as humble a manner as I could, with respect to family prayer. I told them I believed they had brought us up in the fear of God as far as they knew; but we never had any family prayer. I added, 'If it is agreeable to you, I will endeavor to pray in the best manner I can.' On their consenting, we went into another room. I had not spoken many words in prayer before they were both in tears. So merciful was the Lord to my family that four of them were brought to God in a year."

Shadford was preaching in Yorkshire when he heard that his father was dying and hastened to his bedside: "He said to me: 'Son, I am glad to see thee; but I am going to leave thee; I am going to God; I am going to heaven.' I said, 'Father, are you sure of it?' 'Yes,' said he, 'I am sure of it. I know that my Redeemer liveth. Upward of four years ago the Lord pardoned

all my sins; and half a year ago he gave me that perfect love that casts out all fear. At present I feel a heaven within me. Surely this heaven below must lead to that heaven above.'"

The Lord having owned his labors as an exhorter and local preacher, Wesley came into that part of the country and asked him if he was willing to give himself up wholly to the great work of saving souls from death. "I replied that it was my desire so to do. Accordingly, at the Bristol Conference following, I was appointed to labor in the west of Cornwall for the year 1768. This was a good year to me." Every year was a good year where George Shadford labored; and it was a good thing for the American Circuit when he was sent to it in 1773. To its loss, he did not abide on this side the Atlantic. His labors were blessed in New York and Philadelphia, and in Delaware, but especially in Virginia, for the country suited him better than the towns. At this last appointment he was much dejected; but he continues:

I often felt much of this before a remarkable manifestation of the power and presence of God. In preaching and prayer the Lord strips and empties before he fills. I saw myself so vile and worthless as I cannot express; and wondered that God should employ me in his work. I was amazed when I first began to preach in Virginia; for I seldom preached a sermon but some were convinced and converted, often three or four at a time. I could scarcely believe them when they told me.

Once, coming to a stream he found the flood too high for him to reach the bridge. Going back half a mile to a planter's house, he was granted lodgings; man and wife and children and servants all ignorant of God. "If you will send out and gather the neighbors, I will preach." The congregation were at first like wild-boars for roughness, but were subdued to tolerable order. Next day the man showed him across the stream, and went to his appointment with him, and wept under the sermon, and made him promise to preach again at his house. "In a short time," says Shadford, "he and his wife became deep penitents, and soundly converted by the power of God. A very remarkable work began from that little circumstance; and before I left Virginia, there were sixty or seventy raised up in Society in that settlement. There were four traveling preachers that year in the circuit [Brunswick]. We added eighteen hundred members."

By 1778 the pressure became intolerable. Shadford had an interview with Asbury, and by prayer and fasting they sought to know the will of God, whether to leave America or not. Shad-



ford said he was impressed that his mission here was at an end, and that he ought to go. "There must be something wrong," said Asbury, "for my conviction is just the opposite, that I ought to stay." "Nothing wrong," said Shadford. "You may be called to stay, and I may be called to go." They wept in each other's arms and parted; and so Asbury alone was left of all the preachers sent out from England.

Shadford resumed the circuit in England. The unction never departed from him. He began his ministry like Gideon, asking for sign upon sign; but the way of duty being plain, his consecration was complete, his path grew brighter and brighter, and at the end he triumphed gloriously. After becoming supernumerary, he had a hundred souls under his care as a class-leader. At an inspection of them by Jabez Bunting, it was found that "more than ninety were clear in their Christian experience, and many of them were living in the enjoyment of the perfect love of God." He found a good wife in his latter years, and had a competent livelihood. Afflicted in old age with blindness, he was restored to sight by a surgical operation. "You will have the pleasure," said the surgeon, "of seeing to use your knife and fork again." "Doctor," he replied, "I shall have a greater pleasure, that of seeing to read my Bible;" and the first use of his restored sight was to read the sacred pages—reading and weeping with inexpressible joy. At the age of seventy-eight, when informed by his physician that the disease under which he was then suffering would be fatal, "he broke out in rapture, exclaiming, 'Glory to God!'" "While he lay in view of an eternal world, and was asked if all was clear before him, he replied, 'I bless God it is;' and added, 'Victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb!'"

The situation of Asbury and his companions, at the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, was sufficiently embarrassing, even in the absence of any provocation beyond their nationality and their spiritual vocation. The enmity which their doctrine excited, among bigoted sectaries and sinners, would be sure to make a sinister use of the fact that they were citizens of a foreign nation with which America was engaged in an unequal and desperate struggle. However prudent and blameless in conduct, they nevertheless must have been at a serious disadvantage in pursuing the itinerant ministry. But it was by the hand of Wesley himself—strangely enough—that the heaviest disability was

laid upon them. The British Government needed to propitiate public opinion to the course it was pursuing toward the Colonies, and for this purpose Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote his famous political tract, "Taxation no Tyranny." Wesley, with but a slight abridgment, adopted it, and issued his "Calm Address to the American Colonies" in the fall of 1775. It raised a storm about his ears; for a considerable party at home believed the Americans were just in their cause. Wesley's enemies, who had been worsted in the recent Calvinistic controversy, flew upon him furiously. Their charge of plagiarism was not without color, unless, as has been suggested, a mutual understanding existed between Johnson and himself. In a letter to Wesley, dated February 6, 1776, Johnson wrote: "I have thanks to return for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has had upon the public I know not; but I have no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right who, though he saw his audience slinking away, refused to quit the chair while Plato staid."

All this fell very heavily upon those least able to bear it—the Wesleyan preachers and people in America. It may be said, in mitigation, that before this "Address to the Colonies," dissuading them from fighting for their cause and their grievances, Wesley had addressed a letter, in June, to Lord North, the Premier, and sent a copy of it to Dartmouth, the Colonial Secretary, dissuading them from war. We give an extract from this bold paper—this plea for peace with those who were able to make peace:

But waiving this, waiving all considerations of right and wrong, I ask, Is it common sense to use force toward the Americans? A letter now before me, which I received yesterday, says, "Four hundred of the regulars and forty of the militia were killed in the late skirmish." What a disproportion is this! And this is the first essay of raw men against regular troops. You see, my lord, whatever has been affirmed, these men will not be frightened; and it seems they will not be conquered so easily as was at first imagined. They will probably dispute every inch of ground, and, if they die, die sword in hand. Indeed, some of our valiant officers say, "Two thousand men will clear America of these rebels." No, nor twenty thousand, be they rebels or not, nor perhaps treble that number. They are as strong men as you; they are as valiant as you, if not abundantly more valiant, for they are one and all enthusiasts—enthusiasts for liberty. They are calm, deliberate enthusiasts; and we know how this principle breathes into softer souls stern love of war, and thirst of vengeance, and contempt of death. We know that men, animated with this spirit, will leap into a fire, or rush into a cannon's mouth.

"But they are divided amongst themselves." So you are informed by various letters and memorials. So, doubt not, was poor Rehoboam informed concerning the ten tribes. So, nearer our own times, was Philip informed concerning the people of the Netherlands. No, my lord, they are terribly united. The bulk of the people are so united that to speak a word in favor of the present English measures would almost endanger a man's life. Those who informed me of this, one of whom was with me last week, lately come from Philadelphia, are no sycophants; they say nothing to curry favor; they have nothing to gain or lose by me. But they speak with sorrow of heart what they have seen with their own eyes, and heard with their own ears.

These men think, one and all, be it right or wrong, that they are contending *pro aris et focis*; for their wives, children, and liberty. What an advantage have they herein over many that fight only for pay! none of whom care a straw for the cause wherein they are engaged; most of whom strongly disapprove of it. Have they not another considerable advantage? Is there occasion to recruit the troops? Their supplies are at hand, and all round about them. Ours are three thousand miles off! Are we then able to conquer the Americans, suppose they are left to themselves? Suppose all our neighbors should stand stock-still, and leave us and them to fight it out? But we are not sure of this.\*

This long and powerful letter reads like a history, rather than a prophecy, of the event. If there had been an ocean cable in that day, Lord North would hardly have consigned Wesley's letter to the official pigeon-hole before a dispatch reached him giving the details of the battle of Bunker Hill. Wesley was in possession of information on the whole subject which few men had. If he must interfere in a matter of so great moment—if, having the public ear, he must speak on the impending issue—then he is seen laying one hand on the arm of the Government, warning the men in power not to begin war, and holding out the other hand to the Colonies, pleading with them not to provoke war. Neither party took his advice. The extreme infelicity of the case was that, while the Letter to Lord North lay in the State archives for nearly a century—its very existence unknown except to the Premier and the Colonial Secretary—the "Address to the Colonies" was published by tens of thousands of copies, and fell with stunning weight upon the missionaries in America. Writ-

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\*The public is indebted to George Smith, F.A.S., author of the History of Wesleyan Methodism (1857), for a knowledge, though late, of this document. Speaking of the Letter to the Premier and the copy of it to Lord Dartmouth, he says: "The latter still exists in Wesley's handwriting; and the author was offered a sight of this document on his engaging not to publish it. This he respectfully declined; and afterward fortunately obtained a transcript of the one sent to Lord North, with full liberty to print it."



ing to them in March of the same year, how to behave in their critical situation, he said: "It is your part to be peace-makers; to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, of rough or smooth words, say not one word against one or the other side." And in the same letter he gave this opinion: "There is now a probability that God will hear prayer, and turn the counsels of Ahithophel into foolishness. It is not unlikely that peace will be reëstablished between England and the Colonies."

That Methodism, known to be so closely associated with Wesley, survived, is to be attributed to the divinity that was in it. It had got hold upon the people, and an able corps of native-born preachers had been raised up to carry on the work that had been begun. ¶ Looking at matters from a prudential point of view, + John Wesley made two huge and grievous blunders in his life: Marrying hastily and meddling with politics. ¶

Asbury, struggling patiently, bravely, heroically, to stand his ground and save the cause, wrote in his journal in 1776: "I received an affectionate letter from Mr. Wesley, and am truly sorry that the venerable man ever dipped into the politics of America. My desire is to live in love and peace with all men; to do them no harm, but all the good I can." So fiercely the tempest raged that he was compelled to seek a retreat with his faithful friend Judge White, in Delaware, and to abide there, out of public labor and public view, for over a year. The enforced retirement was rich in study and devotion, and in labor within a limited sphere. Their recognized and providential leader, he kept up a communication with the preachers in all parts of the wide and distracted field; and when the fiercest of the storm of persecution was over, while war was yet raging, he came forth when it needed him most to guide American Methodism on its important mission. Let thanks be given to Him who still "leadeth Joseph like a flock."

[The biographical facts of this Chapter are mainly drawn from Sandford's *Memoirs of Wesley's Missionaries to America*.]

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Francis Asbury—His Preparation and Ministry—Troubles of Administration—Revival in the Old Brunswick Circuit—Devereux Jarratt—The Preachers Called Out—Watters, Dromgoole, Gatch, Bruce, Ellis, Ware, and their fellow-laborers.

FRANCIS ASBURY was born of peasant parentage in Staffordshire, four miles from Birmingham, England, in 1745. His parents had but two children, and the daughter dying in infancy was the means of turning the mother to a religious life. From his childhood Francis never "dared an oath or hazarded a lie," though he confesses himself not free from other sins of youth. "The love of truth is not natural; but the habit of telling it," he says, "I acquired very early; and so well was I taught that my conscience would never permit me to swear profanely. I learned from my parents a certain form of words for prayer, and I well remember my mother strongly urged my father to family reading and prayer; the singing of psalms was much practiced by them both. Sometimes I was much ridiculed, and called *Methodist parson*, because my mother invited any people who had the appearance of religion to her house. I was sent to school early, and began to read the Bible between six and seven years of age, and greatly delighted in the historical part of it. My school-master was a great churl, and used to beat me cruelly; this drove me to prayer, and it appeared to me that God was very near to me. My father, having but the one son, greatly desired to keep me at school, he cared not how long."

In this design, however, he was disappointed; for the cruelty of the master gave the lad such a horror of school, he chose, when thirteen years old, to be apprenticed to business, at which he wrought six or seven years. He was awakened in his fourteenth year by the conversation and prayers of a pious man, not a Methodist, whom his mother invited to the humble hospitalities of her house:

I became very serious; reading a great deal—Whitefield and Cennick's Sermons, and every good book I could meet with. It was not long before I began to inquire of my mother who, where, what were the Methodists; she gave me a favorable account, and directed me to a person that could take me to Wednesbury to hear them. I soon found this was not the Church—but it was better. The people were so devout—men and women kneeling down, saying, "Amen." Now, behold! they

were singing hymns—sweet sound! Why, strange to tell, the preacher had no prayer-book, and yet he prayed wonderfully! What was yet more extraordinary, the man took his text, and had no sermon-book; thought I, This is wonderful indeed! It is certainly a strange way, but the best way. He talked about confidence, assurance, etc.—of which all my flights and hopes fell short. I had no deep convictions, nor had I committed any deep known sins. At one sermon, some time after, my companion was powerfully wrought on; I was exceedingly grieved that I could not weep like him: yet I knew myself to be in a state of unbelief. On a certain time when we were praying in my father's barn, I believe the Lord pardoned my sins, and justified my soul; but my companions reasoned me out of this belief, saying, "Mr. Mather said a believer was as happy as if he was in heaven." I thought I was not as happy as I would be there, and gave up my confidence, and that for months; yet I was happy; free from guilt and fear, and had power over sin, and felt great inward joy. After this, we met for reading and prayer, and had large and good meetings, and were much persecuted, until the persons at whose houses we held them were afraid, and they were discontinued. I then held meetings frequently at my father's house, exhorting the people there, as also at Sutton-Cofields, and several souls professed to find peace through my labors. I met class awhile at Bromwick Heath, and met in band at Wednesbury. I had preached some months before I publicly appeared in the Methodist meeting-houses; when my labors became more public and extensive, some were amazed, not knowing how I had exercised elsewhere. Behold me now a local preacher; the humble and willing servant of any and of every preacher that called on me by night or by day, being ready, with hasty steps, to go far and wide to do good, visiting Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and indeed almost every place within my reach, for the sake of precious souls; preaching generally three, four, and five times a week, and at the same time pursuing my calling. I think when I was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age I gave myself up to God and his work, after acting as a local preacher near the space of five years.

From the region in which Methodism was planted with most danger and difficulty, where the most furious mobs assailed preachers and people, the Lord will draw out and anoint a chosen vessel, to bear his name far hence, and give the hated doctrine to a continent. It was no sudden impulse, no uncalculated conclusion that brought Francis Asbury to our shores. He had been a traveling preacher four or five years when he went up to the Conference at Bristol in 1771. "Before this," he says, "I had felt for half a year strong intimations in my mind that I should visit America; which I laid before the Lord, being unwilling to do my own will, or to run before I was sent."

Volunteers were called for, and five responded and two were accepted. Asbury's account is: "I spoke my mind, and made an offer of myself. It was accepted by Mr. Wesley and others, who judged I had a call. From Bristol I went home to acquaint my



parents with my great undertaking, which I opened in as gentle a manner as possible. Though it was grievous to flesh and blood, they consented to let me go. My mother is one of the tenderest parents in the world; but I believe she was blessed in the present instance with Divine assistance to part with me." The unusual tears which his father shed smote sorely upon the preacher's heart when, years afterward, the news of his death reached him in the woods of America, where, constrained by the love of Christ, he was seeking wandering souls.

Bristol seems to have been, then, the point of missionary embarkation; and when his affecting leave-takings of parents and friends were over, Asbury found himself at the ship, without a penny. "Yet," he writes, "the Lord soon opened the hearts of friends, who supplied me with clothes and ten pounds; thus I found, by experience, that he will provide for those who trust in him." The ship sailed on the 4th of September. He had but two blankets for his bed, and slept with them on the hard boards during the voyage. "I want," he writes, "faith, courage, patience, meekness, love. When others suffer so much for their temporal interests, surely I may suffer a little for the glory of God and the good of souls. I feel my spirit bound to the New World, and my heart united to the people, though unknown; and have great cause to believe that I am not running before I am sent. The more troubles I meet with, the more convinced I am that I am doing the will of God. The people God owns in England are the Methodists. The doctrines they preach, and the discipline they enforce, are, I believe, the purest of any people in the world. The Lord has greatly blessed these doctrines and this discipline in the three kingdoms; they must therefore be pleasing to him. If God does not acknowledge me in America, I will soon return to England. I know my views are upright now. May they never be otherwise!"

A Christian welcome awaited him at Philadelphia; he thanked God and took courage. "When I came near the American shore, my very heart melted within me, to think from whence I came, where I was going, and what I was going about." A born leader, he instinctively surveyed the situation, and the impression was made that the biggest part of the New World was the country, not the towns; and that the ministerial force had been too much confined to the latter. A week after landing, his journal

notes: "November 4.—We held a watch-night. Toward the end, a plain man spoke, who came out of the country, and his words went with great power to the souls of the people; so that we may say, 'Who hath despised the day of small things?' not the Lord our God; then why should self-important man?"

Moving on to New York, he preached his opening sermon in Embury's chapel on, "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "I approved much," says he, "of the spirit of the people; they were loving and serious; there appeared also in some a love of discipline. Though I was unwilling to go to York so soon, I believe it is all well; and I still hope I am in the order of God."

Here he found Boardman, as he had left Pilmoor, settling down into winter-quarters; and we are not surprised at this item in his journal: "At present I am dissatisfied, and judge that we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way." "I am come over with an upright intention, and through the grace of God I will make it appear, and am determined that no man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches." "Whomsoever I please or displease, I will be faithful to God, to the people, and to my own soul." In pursuance of this design, he made an excursion to West Farms and to Westchester, preaching in court-houses, barns, and private houses. He spent the winter alternately in the city and country, extending his labors to New Rochelle, to Rye, and to Staten Island, where he preached at the houses of Van Pelt, Wright, and Disosway. Soon there were half a dozen preaching-places on the island. This was the beginning of Methodism there; and as in many other instances of sowing beside all waters, one event connects itself with another afar off. When Asbury, as Bishop, crossed the Blue Ridge, he found a brother of his old friend, Peter Van Pelt, in the French Broad country. An instant and most friendly alliance naturally followed their meeting, and Benjamin Van Pelt became a useful local preacher, formed several Societies, and built Van Pelt's Meeting-house—an ancient landmark of East Tennessee Methodism.

It was not long before Boardman was traveling North and East, as far as Boston; though he made little impression upon the New Englanders. Pilmoor went southward; from Norfolk, he extended his trip to Charleston and Savannah, and thence returned.

No Societies were planted by him, but something was gained to the cause by a survey of the land, and by the people seeing and hearing a good Methodist preacher. Norfolk had much labor bestowed upon it before it took the rank it has long held as a moral city. Asbury found there a hard place, as had Pilmoor, and Williams, and Watters, and Wright, and King, before him. Pilmoor, passing through Portsmouth on his return from the South, came upon two men at the ferry, swearing horribly. He raised his hands, and exclaimed: "Well! if I had been brought to this place blindfolded, I should have known I was near Norfolk."

His preaching excited the opposition of the easy-going parish clergy of the city, and during his absence the parson attempted to turn the tide of feeling against the Methodists by preaching on, "Be not righteous overmuch." He assured the people that he knew from experience the evil of being overrighteous. To his surprise and that of his friends, Pilmoor returned a few days after, and gave notice that he would preach on the verse next following the parson's text, "Be not overmuch wicked." The people crowded to the preaching-place. Having read the text, he said he had been informed that a certain divine of that town had given them a solemn caution against being righteous overmuch. Then lifting his hands, and with a very significant countenance, he exclaimed, "And in *Norfolk* he hath given this caution!"

In October, 1772, by appointment, Asbury became chief or General Assistant, having the direction of affairs and the appointing of the preachers, subject to Wesley's supervision. Boardman quietly fell into a subordinate position, and the itinerancy was really inaugurated. Asbury formed a circuit around Philadelphia, as he had done around New York, taking in Chester and Wilmington, and sweeping into New Jersey. He wrote to Williams, on hearing one of his stirring reports: "I hope that before long about seven preachers of us will spread over seven or eight hundred miles."

Upon his new appointment, Asbury moved his head-quarters to the center of operations—Baltimore; he "settled" the Society into classes, and thus got for the members the benefit of closer oversight and of better spiritual edification. Not content with preaching at the market-place and in private houses, he moved for the building of two churches—Fell's Point and Light Street



—the first of their kind in a city which has since enjoyed the eminence of being a city of Methodist churches. Here, as in New York and Philadelphia, he made the city a rallying-point from which to extend his labors. Beginning at Baltimore, he by no means confined his labors to that place, but traveled extensively through various parts of Maryland, preaching every day, forming into classes those who had been awakened to a sense of their sin and their danger, that they might help each other to work out their salvation. In December, having gone round that part of his circuit which lay on the Western Shore, he crossed the Susquehanna, in company with John King, to visit that part of it which lay on the Peninsula, between Chester River and Wilmington. His circuit lay in six counties. He traveled over it every three weeks, about twenty-four appointments—assisted by King, Strawbridge, Owen, and other preachers and exhorters. On the Eastern Shore of Maryland, particularly in the county of Kent, there was a revival of religion, by which many souls were brought to the “knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.” Kent Circuit was reported the next year, with its meeting-house, the first on the Peninsula, which has continued a fruitful field for Methodism. The rafters prepared for the chapel were broken in the night by enemies; but the Society persisted and prevailed.

Asbury gives this adventure, on his visit to this point where Strawbridge and his exhorters had opened the way. It is a sample of the shepherds on whom the Methodists were dependent for the sacraments, while they continued to depend on the “clergy:”

December 12.—Went twelve miles into Kent county, and had many great people to hear me. Before preaching, one Mr. R., a Church minister, came to me and desired to know who I was, and whether I was licensed. I told him who I was. He spoke great swelling words, and told me he had authority over the people, and was charged with the care of their souls. He also told me that I could not and should not preach; and if I did, he would proceed against me according to law. I let him know that I came to preach, and preach I would; and further asked him if he had authority to bind the consciences of the people, or if he was a justice of the peace; and told him I thought he had nothing to do with me. He charged me with making a schism. I told him that I did not draw the people from the church; and asked him if his church was then open. He told me that I hindered the people from their work; but I asked him if fairs and horse-races did not hinder them. And further told him that I came to help him. He said, he had not hired an assistant, and did not want my help. I told him if there were no swearers or other sinners, he was sufficient. But said he, “What did you come for?” I replied, “To turn sinners to God.” He said, “Cannot I do this as well

as you?" I told him that I had authority from God. He then laughed at me, and said, "You are a fine fellow, indeed!" I told him I did not do this to invalidate his authority; and also gave him to understand that I did not wish to dispute with him; but he said he had business with *me*, and came into the house in a great rage. I began to preach, and urged the people to repent and turn from all their transgressions, so iniquity should not prove their ruin. After preaching, the parson went out, and told the people they did wrong in coming to hear me, and said I spoke against learning, whereas I only spoke to this purpose: when a man turned from all sin, he would adorn every character in life, both in Church and State.

Early in the spring he started North, wandering off the direct route right and left, with his gospel message, till he came to New York. "Trouble is at hand," writes Asbury, "but I cannot fear while my heart is upright with God. I seek nothing but him, and fear nothing but his displeasure."

On leaving the Southern Circuit he notes a fact which characterized his ministry: "Felt much power while preaching on perfect love. The more I speak on this subject, the more my soul is filled and drawn out in love. This doctrine has a great tendency to prevent people from settling on their lees." He had thoroughly accepted this Wesleyan doctrine, though up to this point there is no unequivocal record of his experience of it. He seems to have settled upon this view: That if a preacher is convinced of the truth of a doctrine he ought to preach it, whether he himself has personally experienced it or not; the gift of God and the privileges of believers are not to be measured by the attainments of the messenger, but by the terms of the message; the advice of Peter Böhler, on preaching faith, may be applied to Christian perfection—preach it until you have it, and then because you have it you will preach it.

Troubles of administration frequently arose—that plague in the planting of missions distant from the seat of authority—and Asbury had come to settle them. Pilmoor and Wright were highly displeased with him about something, and the gentle Boardman, like enough, did not relish the shaking-up that Asbury was giving to men and things. There was too much of military movement and drill to suit their views, and they as well as he were relieved by the coming of Thomas Rankin to supersede him. On hearing his successor's sermon, he made this note: "He will not be admired as a preacher; but as a disciplinarian, he will fill his place." Before T. R. left America, Asbury thought more of his preaching than of his administrative ability.

Conference at Philadelphia (1773) being concluded, Asbury, in a notice of its proceedings, gives this hint of the cause of his troubles: "There were some debates among the preachers in this Conference relative to the conduct of some who had manifested a desire to abide in the cities and live like gentlemen. Three years out of four have already been spent in the cities. It was also found that money had been wasted, improper leaders appointed, and many of our rules broken." Asbury was sent to Baltimore, where he finished what he had begun by putting Methodism on a firm footing, well organized in the city and in the strong centers within reach of it:

Asbury's usefulness in the Baltimore Circuit at this time had permanently important results. He gathered into the young Societies not a few of those influential families whose opulence and social position gave material strength to Methodism through much of its early history in that city, while their exemplary devotion helped to maintain its primitive purity and power. Henry Dorsey Gough and his family were distinguished examples. Gough possessed a fortune in lands and money amounting to more than three hundred thousand dollars. He had married a daughter of Governor Ridgeley. His country residence—Perry Hall, about twelve miles from the city—was "one of the most spacious and elegant in America at that time." But he was an unhappy man in the midst of his luxury. His wife had been deeply impressed by the Methodist preaching, but he forbade her to hear them again. While reveling with wine and gay companions, one evening, it was proposed that they should divert themselves by going together to a Methodist assembly. Asbury was the preacher, and no godless diversion could be found in his presence. "What nonsense have we heard to-night!" exclaimed one of the convivialists, as they returned. "No," replied Gough, startling them with sudden surprise; "what we have heard is the truth, the truth as it is in Jesus." "I will never hinder you again from hearing the Methodists," he said, as he entered his house and met his wife.\*

He was converted; both he and his wife joined the Methodists, and his house became a preaching-place and an asylum for the itinerants. A chapel was built contiguous to Perry Hall, and he built another chapel for the Methodists in a poor neighborhood. After some years Gough fell away, but under the ministry of Asbury was reclaimed in 1800. After his reclamation he exclaimed: "O if my wife had ever given way to the world I should have been lost! but her uniformly good life inspired me with the hope that I should one day be restored to the favor of God." He died in 1808, while the General Conference was in session in Baltimore. Asbury, who had twice led him to the cross, was

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\*Stevens's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Vol. I.



present to comfort him in his final trial. The Bishop describes him as "a man much respected and beloved; as a husband, a father, and a master, well worthy of imitation; his charities were as numerous as proper objects to a Christian were likely to make them; and the souls and the bodies were administered to in the manner of a Christian who remembered the precepts and followed the example of his Divine Master."

Asbury's journals have rendered the name of Perry Hall familiar. A veteran itinerant has drawn the picture of its Christian hospitalities:

We were received in their usual warm and affectionate way, and I was for the first time introduced to that dear household. I soon found that religion in its native simplicity dwelt in some great houses, and that some of the rich had been cast in the gospel mold, and came out in the image and likeness of their Lord. Perry Hall was the largest dwelling-house I had ever seen, and all of its arrangements, within and without, were tasteful and elegant, yet simplicity and utility seemed to be stamped upon the whole. The garden, orchards, and every thing else, were delightful indeed, and looked to me like an earthly paradise. But, what pleased me better than any thing else, I found a neat chapel attached to the house, with a small cupola, and a bell that could be heard all over the farm. In this chapel morning and evening prayers were offered to God. The bell rang about half an hour before prayer, when the manager and servants from the farm-house, and servants' quarters and garden, together with the inhabitants of the great mansion, repaired to the chapel. So large and well-regulated a family I never saw before.

If no minister were present, Mrs. Gough read a chapter and gave out a hymn which was sung by the negro servants, and she prayed. Asbury was poor, and he loved and lived with the poor and served them; but it was a feature of his character that without seeking the great or compromising with fashionable sins and vanities, he had the power of making homes where his Master made his grave—with the rich. He entered the house of many a Zaccheus, bringing salvation with him. There was a simplicity and genuine refinement in manners, an unfeigned warmth of heart, an unassumed dignity of person and presence, an impression of goodness and worth, that made people love and venerate him. Over the Middle and Southern States especially some of his far apart resting-places are familiar to the readers of his journal: Perry Hall, in Maryland; Bassett's and White's, in Delaware; Dromgoole's, in Virginia; Edmond Taylor's and Green Hill's, in North Carolina; Rembert Hall, in South Carolina; General Russell's, over the mountains.

Kindred spirits as well as neighboring fields brought Asbury and his co-laborers acquainted with Devereux Jarratt, of Bath Parish, Dinwiddie county, Virginia. If all the clergy had been like him, there would have been no Methodists; but he stood alone among the parish priests, with the exception of Archibald McRoberts, of Chesterfield, who, to complete the general abandonment of the field, in 1779 united himself with the Presbyterians.

Jarratt was a native of Virginia, born in 1732. He was sent to a plain school, and in the vacations divided his time between working on the farm and training race-horses and game-cocks. Occasionally he worked as a carpenter, which trade his father had followed before him. At nineteen he determined to be a teacher. Hearing of a situation in Albermarle county, he set out to find it, and was engaged at £9, 7s. per annum. The third year he taught in the family of a pious lady who greatly assisted him in his religious life. He now became deeply concerned about the salvation of his soul, and determined to take orders in the Established Church. Having saved sufficient money to pay his expenses, he sailed for England in the fall of 1762. He had to wait until the following spring before he received ordination.

Taking charge of his parish, he began to preach and to travel, and like the Methodists to put awakened souls into Societies. When he first administered the communion, only seven or eight of the more aged at church came forward to receive it; twelve years later, at three churches included in Bath Parish, there were a thousand communicants. This is Jarratt's description of his preaching at that time:

Instead of moral harangues, and advising my hearers in a cool, dispassionate manner to walk in the primrose paths of a decided, sublime, and elevated virtue, and not to travel the foul track of disgraceful vice (the favorite style of preaching in that day), I endeavored to enforce in the most alarming colors the guilt of sin, the entire depravity of human nature, the awful danger mankind are in, by nature and by practice, the tremendous curse to which they are obnoxious, and their utter inability to evade the sentence of the law and the stroke of divine justice by their own power, merit, or good works. Ignorance of the things of God, profaneness, and irreligion, then prevailed among all ranks and degrees; so that I doubt if even the form of godliness was to be found in any one family of this large and populous parish. I was a stranger to the people; my doctrines were quite new to them, and were neither preached nor believed by any other clergyman, so far as I could learn, throughout the province.

The usual result followed, and his evangelical labors were called

for in several counties, not without remonstrance from some of his brethren at his irregularities. When the Established clergy began to forsake the sinking ship, Jarratt stood at his post. He welcomed the Methodists and heartily coöperated with them, adopting their methods, and by administering the sacraments did all that one man could do to keep down their rising dissatisfaction about the ordinances. It is to be regretted that this good man, when the Methodist flock failed to be gathered into his fold, became alienated from them, and was led to speak and write depreciatingly of a Christian body which elected not to fall within his ecclesiastical lines. For awhile he not only labored with them and was blessed in his deed, but he bore their reproach. During the revival on Brunswick Circuit, in which Devereux Jarratt took so eminent a part, he attended a convention of his Church at Williamsburg, and was treated so unkindly, and heard the doctrines of Christianity so ridiculed, that he was minded to attend no more. In 1785 he was present at another in Richmond, but was so coldly received that he remained only a few hours and then rode home. He was better received at the convention of 1790, which elected their first bishop; at that of 1792 he preached the opening sermon. On his way home he was requested to take part in an ordination at Petersburg. In the examination he refused two of the candidates as unfit for the office. "But what did that avail?" says he. "Another clergyman was called in, and I had the mortification to *hear* both of them ordained the same day. I say *hear*, for it was a sight I did not wish to see." He sat in a pew in the corner, his head covered with his handkerchief. The Bishop's excuse was that "ministers were so scarce, we must not be too strict."

In 1775 George Shadford went to Brunswick Circuit with Dromgoole and Glendenning. The revival which had begun under Mr. Jarratt is best described by himself. How nearly he approached the Methodists, and how useful he found their means of grace, will appear from the account he sent to Wesley through Rankin:

In the years 1770 and 1771 we had a more considerable outpouring of the Spirit, at a place in my parish called White Oak. It was here first I formed the people into a Society, that they might assist and strengthen each other. The good effects of this were soon apparent. Convictions were deep and lasting; and not only knowledge but faith and love and holiness continually increased. In the year 1772 the revival was more considerable, and extended itself in some places



for fifty or sixty miles around. It increased still more in the following year, and several sinners were truly converted to God. In spring, 1774, it was more remarkable than ever. The word preached was attended with such energy that many were pierced to the heart. Tears fell plentifully from the eyes of the hearers, and some were constrained to cry out. The work increased in 1775, but was more considerable in January, 1776. It broke out nearly at the same time, at three places not far from each other. Two of these places are in my parish, the other in Amelia county, which had for many years been notorious for carelessness, profaneness, and immoralities of all kinds. Some time last year, one of my parish (now a local preacher) appointed some meetings among them, and after awhile induced a small number to join in Society. And though a few, if any of them, were believers, yet this was a means of preparing the way of the Lord.

As there were few converts in my parish last year [1775], I was sensible a change of preachers was wanting. This has often revived the work of God; and so it did at the present time. Last December, one of the Methodist preachers, Mr. S[hadford], preached several times at the three places above mentioned. He confirmed the doctrine I had long preached; and to many of them not in vain. And while their ears were opened by novelty, God set his word home upon their hearts. Many sinners were powerfully convinced, and "Mercy!" "Mercy!" was their cry. In January the news of convictions and conversions was common; and the people of God were inspired with new life and vigor by the happiness of others. But in a little time they were made thoroughly sensible that they themselves stood in need of a deeper work in their own hearts than they had yet experienced. And while those were panting and groaning for pardon, these were entreating God, with strong cries and tears, to save them from the remains of inbred sin, to "sanctify them throughout in spirit, soul, and body;" so to "circumcise their hearts" that they might "love God with all their hearts," and serve him with all their strength.

The outpouring of the Spirit which began here soon extended itself, more or less, through most of the circuit, which is regularly attended by the traveling preachers, and which takes in a circumference of between four and five hundred miles. The unhappy disputes between England and her Colonies, which just before had engrossed all our conversation, seemed now in most companies to be forgot, while things of far greater importance lay so near the heart.

One of the doctrines, as you know, which we particularly insist upon, is that of a present salvation; a salvation not only from the guilt and power but also from the root of sin; a cleansing from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that we may perfect holiness in the fear of God; a going on to perfection, which we sometimes define by loving God with all our hearts. Several who had believed were deeply sensible of their want of this. I have seen both men and women, who had long been happy in a sense of God's pardoning love, as much convicted on account of the remains of sin in their hearts, and as much distressed for a total deliverance from them, as ever I saw any for justification. Their whole cry was:

"O that I now the rest might know,  
Believe and enter in!  
Now, Saviour, now the power bestow,  
And let me cease from sin!"

And I have been present when they believed that God answered this prayer,

and bestowed this blessing upon them. I have conversed with them several times since, and have found them thoroughly devoted to God. They all testify that they have received the gift instantaneously, and by simple faith. We have sundry witnesses of this perfect love who are above all suspicion.

This reads as if a Methodist had written it. Jarratt describes further how mourners were helped by class-meetings and love-feasts; how "in a moment the Lord spoke peace to their souls" and they rejoiced in the witness of the Spirit. "Where the greatest work was," he says, "where the greatest number of souls have been convinced and converted to God, there have been the most outcries, tremblings, convulsions, and all sorts of external signs. I took all the pains I could that these might be kept within bounds, that our good might not be evil spoken of. This I did, not by openly inveighing against them in the public assembly, but by private advices to local preachers and others, as opportunity would permit. This method had its desired effect, without putting a sword into the hands of the wicked." This revival of religion spread through fourteen counties in Virginia, and through old Bute and Halifax counties in North Carolina; at the same time, in several counties bordering upon Maryland.

Shadford carried up a glowing account to Conference, in May, 1776, at Baltimore, and Jarratt followed him with a joyful letter: "I praise God for his goodness, in so plentifully pouring out of his Spirit on men, women, and children. I believe threescore, in and near my parish, have believed, through grace, since the quarterly-meeting. Such a work I never saw with my eyes. Sometimes twelve, sometimes fifteen, find the Lord at one class-meeting. I am just returned from meeting two classes. Much of the power of God was in each. My dear partner is now happy in God her Saviour. I clap my hands exulting, and praise God. Blessed be the Lord, that ever he sent you and your brethren into this part of his vineyard!"

Asbury had been sent to a hard field that year. He found in Norfolk thirty persons in Society, with no regular class-meetings, and no place of worship but an "old, shattered play-house;" and twenty-seven in Portsmouth, who by discipline were soon reduced one-half. Like himself, he circled far and near, doing in the country what he failed to do in the two towns. With joy he took a laborious vacation in October. He writes: "I expect to go to Brunswick shortly, and my heart rejoices in hope of see-

ing good days, and many souls brought to God in those parts." One week after: "I am now within a few miles of dear Brother George Shadford; my soul catches the holy fire already." And soon he had his brother Englishman in his arms and gave him "the holy kiss," and they joined hands and hearts in their loved employ.

Let us glance at the helpers raised up in America, upon whom devolved preaching the word and the extension of the work after the English missionaries were withdrawn. The Lord of the harvest wonderfully supplied their places.

William Watters was born in Baltimore county, 1751, and was converted in his twentieth year. His third sermon was preached in "Baltimore town," as he was being taken out into the itinerancy the next year, by Williams going toward the South. His account of himself and his times shows how promptly the pioneer preachers put their converts to work:

My conversion was (in that dark day and place) much talked of, as also my praying in a short time after without a book, which, to some, appeared a proof that there was a notable miracle wrought on me indeed. We had no regular preaching in those days, nor had there ever been but three Methodist preachers in Maryland—Williams, Strawbridge, and King—so that we were frequently for months with very little preaching, and then for weeks we had it frequently, but in one sense we were all preachers; the visible change that sinners could not but see, and many openly acknowledged, was a means of bringing them to seek the Lord. On the Lord's-day we commonly divided into little bands, and went out into different neighborhoods, wherever there was a door open to receive us—two, three, or four in company—and would sing our hymns, pray, read, talk to the people, and some soon began to add a word of exhortation. We were weak, but we lived in a dark day, and the Lord greatly owned our labors; for though we were not full of wisdom, we were blessed with a good degree of faith and power. The little flock was of one heart and mind, and the Lord spread the heaven of his grace from heart to heart, from house to house, and from one neighborhood to another; and though our gifts were very small, yet it was astonishing to see how rapidly the work spread all around, bearing down the little oppositions with which it met, as chaff before the wind. Many will praise God forever for our prayer-meetings. In many neighborhoods they soon became respectable, and were considerably attended to.\*

Two of Watters's brothers were converted through his instrumentality, one of them becoming a zealous local preacher, and later a traveling preacher. He was a meek and judicious man, and rendered valuable service by diffusing socially a healthful,

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\* "Christian Experience and Ministerial Labor of Wm. Watters." Drawn up by himself. Printed at Alexandria, 1806.



loving spirit, as well as by preaching. Such items as this, on the Sussex Circuit (1778), marked his ministry: "I did not get round the circuit the second time, before the Lord was graciously pleased to pour out his Spirit in a very unusual manner, just after I had been preaching, and was meeting the class. The windows of heaven were opened, and the Lord poured out such a blessing as our hearts were not able to contain. We were so filled with the love of God, and overawed with his divine majesty, that we lay prostrate at his footstool, scarcely able to rise from our knees for a considerable time, while there were strong cries and prayers from every part of the house for that 'perfect love which casteth out all fear that hath torment.'" He was not a great preacher; but, closing up a happy and prosperous year, he gives the key to his success: "The most glorious work that ever I beheld was in this circuit amongst believers. Scores professed to be sanctified unto the Lord. I could not be satisfied without pressing on Christians their privilege; and indeed I could not but remark that however able the speakers, if nothing of the sanctification of the Spirit was dwelt on, believers appeared not to be satisfied, and that however weak, if they from the fullness of their hearts and in faith exhorted believers to go on to perfection, the word was blessed."

The severest language we have found in all that is published by William Watters was (1806) in defense of his bishop: "But a greater charge than the love of power has been brought against Mr. Asbury (though I believe only by a few); even that of the love of money. I think a devil ought to blush (if it were possible) at such a charge."

To Richard Owen belongs the distinction of heading the long roll of American Methodist preachers. Watters, the first itinerant among them, thus speaks of him:

Though encumbered with a family, he often left wife and children and a comfortable living, and went into many distant parts, before we had any traveling preachers amongst us, and without fee or reward freely published that gospel to others which he had happily found to be the power of God unto his own salvation. And after we had regular circuit preachers amongst us, he as a local preacher was ever ready to fill up a gap; and by his continuing to go into neighborhoods where they had no preaching, he was often the means of opening the way for enlarging old or forming new circuits in different places. Several years before his dissolution, after his children were grown up and able to attend his family concerns, he gave himself up entirely to the work of the ministry, and finished his course in

Leesburg, Fairfax Circuit, in the midst of many kind friends, but some distance from his family.

Philip Gatch, connected with the best history of Methodism in both the East and the West, was born near Georgetown, Maryland, in 1751.\* He and Watters began their public labors as exhorters the same year, and they were the first two native Methodist preachers reported in the Minutes. He had early awakenings, but there was no one to take him by the hand and lead him to the fountain of life. From a child the Spirit of grace strove with him. "It pleased God," he says, "to send the gospel into our neighborhood in 1772, through the instrumentality of the Methodists. Nathan Perigau [a local preacher converted under Strawbridge] introduced Methodist preaching where I lived. I was near him when he opened the first meeting. His prayer alarmed me much. The sermon was accompanied to my understanding by the Holy Ghost. I was stripped of all self-righteousness. I saw myself altogether sinful and helpless, while the dread of hell seized my guilty conscience." Gatch heard Perigau again, and his trouble increased. He says:

On the 26th of April I attended a prayer-meeting. After remaining some time, I gave up all hopes, and left the house. I felt that I was too bad to remain where the people were worshipping God. At length a friend came out to me, and requested me to return to the meeting; believing him to be a good man, I returned with him, and, under the deepest exercise of mind, bowed myself before the Lord, and said in my heart, "If thou wilt give me power to call on thy name, how thankful will I be!" Immediately I felt the power of God to affect me, body and soul. I felt like crying aloud. God said, by his Spirit, to my soul, "My power is present to heal thy soul, if thou wilt but believe." I instantly submitted to the operation of the Spirit of God, and my poor soul was set at liberty. I felt as if I had got into a new world. I was certainly brought from hell's dark door, and made nigh unto God by the blood of Jesus. I was the first person known to shout in that part of the country. A grateful sense of the mercy and goodness of God to my poor soul overwhelmed me. I tasted, and saw that the Lord was good. Two others found peace the same evening, which made seven conversions in the neighborhood. I returned home happy in the love of God.

His father received him ungraciously. "There is your elder brother," the father had said to him, "he has better learning than you; if there is any thing good in it, why does he not find it out?" But this elder brother was "powerfully converted" at the same meeting with Philip. The brothers introduced family prayers,

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\* Sketch of Rev. Philip Gatch, prepared by Hon. John McLean, LL.D., Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States. Cincinnati, 1854.

and Philip Gatch's first exhortation was at home. "The Lord blessed me," he says, "with a spirit of prayer, and he made manifest his saving power among us. I rose from my knees and spoke to them some time, and it had a gracious effect upon the family. Thenceforward we attended to family prayer."

Perigau was soon preaching in the house. Classes were formed; Gatch's parents, most of their children, a brother-in-law and two sisters-in-law, were in a few weeks recorded among the class-members. "The work was great, for it was the work of God." Philip was soon exhorting, and then as a preacher he went to New Jersey, Virginia, and Maryland, feeble in frame, yet faithfully itinerating and preaching. His judgment, modesty, deep spirituality, and his courage, made him the man for difficult places. Whitworth and Ebert, two apostate preachers, had scandalized the cause on the Eastern Shore and in New Jersey, and within twelve months Gatch was sent to both places to recover the ground that had been lost. He succeeded, and the tide was turned. Gatch manumitted his slaves, and subsequently removed to Ohio, where he took part in the civil as well as religious organization of the territory, and was called Judge Gatch. His posterity are honorably known in Church and State. He died the same year with his old friend and comrade, Dromgoole.

Edward Dromgoole's name appears on the Conference list of 1774. A native of Sligo, he renounced popery before leaving his own land, and was brought to a saving knowledge of Christ in America: emigrated about 1770, and worked awhile with a Christian man as a journeyman tailor. After his family came to opulence and high social position, the thimble with which he wrought was preserved as a relic and an heirloom. He heard his countryman, Strawbridge; was converted, and began to preach; and the next year was sent to Baltimore Circuit with Shadford and two other recruits. A native gift of oratory and an elevated and commanding character were developed during the next twelve years which he spent in the itinerancy. In Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland, the fine results of his influence were wrought into the social and religious life of Methodism. Marrying, he located and made his home in Brunswick county; and died in 1835, in the eighty-fourth year of his age.

As a local preacher he was greatly useful. The blessing of God came upon his household, and he increased in worldly goods.



Mary Walton, his wife, a native of Brunswick, bore him ten children; and their happy union lasted forty-nine years. His numerous family, including many slaves, were brought under Christian influence, and his large hospitality was tested by the entertainment of a Conference. Asbury preached at his house so late as 1815, and ordained him an elder on that occasion. In 1813 he wrote to his fellow-laborer, Philip Gatch: "We are still living in old Brunswick, and nearly in the common way of the country. My five oldest children are professors, and in Society. Our youngest child is sixteen years of age. He is moral, but not a professor yet. May the Lord bring him into the fold! Two of my sons are preachers. I am yet endeavoring to labor in my Master's vineyard."

His youngest son was afterward a leading Congressman of that day;\* and his grandson was a member of the faculty that organized Lagrange College, Alabama, and subsequently held a professorship in Randolph-Macon College, Virginia. He went to Germany, and spent three years in travel and at the University of Halle, perfecting his studies in literature and science. He was filling a chair in the University of Alabama when he died in 1845, in his forty-first year. The Church lost in him one of her ripest scholars and one of her purest and most devoted ministers.†

Among the nine preachers added to the itinerant ranks of the Conference in 1776, there are names not to be forgotten.

Isham Tatum was for eight years a laborious pioneer in the new and hard fields of Virginia and North Carolina. He "desisted from traveling" in 1781. At the time of his death he was the oldest Methodist preacher in the United States, if not in the world. Freeborn Garrettson was born in Maryland, 1752. Awakened under the rough warning of an exhorter, he was converted in 1775, and became a burning and shining light. He inherited wealth, but manumitted his slaves. He traveled through all the Southern field with power; enduring persecution even to imprisonment and bloody wounds, like others of his brethren. He then volunteered for Nova Scotia, and labored there successfully; after

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\* Hon. Geo. C. Dromgoole.

† Prof. Edward D. Sims. He had given special attention to the Anglo-Saxon and all the dialects from which the English language is drawn. It is to be regretted that the material he collected for an Anglo-Saxon grammar, and which he was about publishing, has never been utilized.

which the State of New York was the scene of his apostolic labors. He died in his seventy-sixth year. To specify one more—Francis Poythress, a not less distinguished name, joined the itinerant ranks the same year. A native Virginian; he was converted under Jarratt's ministry, brought eminent ability to the service of Methodism, and was at one time desired by Asbury as his assistant and successor. In Kentucky he bore the banner for years, after a like ministry in the East.

The list of fourteen preachers admitted on trial into the Conference of 1777 is rich in historic names. John Tunnell, after preaching from New Jersey to Carolina, planted Methodism in the fertile Holston Conference, and was the first itinerant to make his grave within its boundaries. Reuben Ellis was one of the most judicious and useful of the wise master-builders who laid the foundations. Caleb Pedicord was eloquent in sermon and song. Le Roy Cole was attracted to "Methodism as the best exponent of Christianity," and although educated for the ministry in the Church of England, he hesitated not to embrace the sacrifices of an itinerant's life. He meekly bore contumely and wrong in his Master's cause, outlived it all, and retired for a time to the local ranks; but again entered the itinerancy, and did much to forward the cause of Methodism in the far West, whither he emigrated in 1808.

Besides these and other natives of the South, John Dickins—Asbury's countryman—was a man of mark. While on a circuit in North Carolina, he helped him to plan for a Kingswood School in America, which "came out a college in the subscription printed by Dr. Coke." He aided in starting and putting into successful operation the "Book Concern," and by "his skill and fidelity as editor, inspector, and corrector of the press," enabled Methodism to lay wide and deep foundations for a Church literature. One said that it might be written on his tomb with truth: "Here lieth he who, in the cause of God, never feared or flattered man." For many years his son, Hon. Asbury Dickins, was clerk of the United States Senate, respected and trusted, and retained in office by all parties. Dickins had studied at Eton College, and was specially fitted to inaugurate a religious publishing house.

John Majors and Richard Ivey appeared in 1778, and later Thomas Humphreys and Wm. Partridge. They responded when laborers were called for to possess South Carolina and Georgia.

Philip Bruce and John Easter were admitted into full connection, after two years' probation, in 1783. John Easter was the most powerful hortatory preacher of his day. Perhaps no man has ever been more honored of God in the conversion of souls. Thousands were brought to God under his ministry, and among them were some of the brightest lights of Methodism, both in the laity and in the ministry. William McKendree and Enoch George were the spiritual children of John Easter. He was a native of Mecklenburg, Virginia.

Philip Bruce was born in North Carolina, near King's Mountain, in 1755—descended from the Huguenots. The family name was De Bruise, but was corrupted into Bruce by a Scotch teacher from whom Philip received his education. He was the first of his family to become a Methodist. When a youth, the pioneer preachers reached the wild region of his home, and under their preaching many were brought to God, among them Philip Bruce. His parents were the first-fruits of his labors. In person he was tall and straight; very grave and dignified in his manners; his hair was worn long, his visage was thin, his complexion dark, and his eyes bright and piercing; his countenance was open and expressive; his features indicative of intellectual power. In the pulpit he was graceful and impressive. His sermons were usually short, but he excelled in the application. His appeals were often irresistible. In one of his episcopal tours Bishop Asbury as usual had sent ahead an appointment for preaching. The Bishop remarked: "Now, Philip, I intend to pile up the brush to-night, and you must set it on fire." Philip Bruce professed, preached, and exemplified sanctification. Like most of the early preachers, he never married. His wisdom in counsel caused the Church to use him in important situations.\*

In the same year, a class of nineteen was admitted on trial; and Jesse Lee, Thomas Ware, and William Phœbus were among them. Ware was a noble and consecrated man, and itinerated in the power of the Spirit from his native New Jersey, through the Carolinas and to Tennessee and Pennsylvania. Jesse Lee was late in entering the itinerancy, but he had not been idle as an exhorter and local preacher. His preaching and literary la-

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\*In old age he removed to Tennessee, and his grave is with kindred dust near Pulaski. He died in 1826—the oldest traveling preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the time, with the exception of Freeborn Garrettson.



bor and his planting Methodism in New England have made his memorial. The time would fail us to tell of Ira Ellis, and John Littlejohn, and John Haggerty, and Isaac Smith; of Wilson Lee, and James Haw, who broke ground as the first missionary to Kentucky; of Ignatius Pigman, and Jeremiah Lambert, and Nelson Reed, and Henry Willis, and David Abbott, and James Foster. They will come into view again. Such men were the gift of God. Their calling and sending forth could be from none other than the Lord of the harvest. Inured to toil and privation, consecrated and anointed, they were fit instruments, providentially prepared, for the era that was now beginning.

Had Joseph Benson been yielded, by the British Conference, to the appeals that were made for him, he would, by his learning and eloquence, have pleased the great cities; but he would also have ranked and superseded Asbury, who was infinitely better suited for the leadership American Methodism then needed. The "Calm Address," so much regretted at the time, cleared the continent of un-American influences, and left in the hands of a ministry to the manner born, and in thorough sympathy with the social and political institutions of the country, the formation of its most successful ecclesiastical institution.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

The Question of the Ordinances—Destitution—Clamor of the People for the Sacraments—Deferred Settlement—Temporary Division—The Concession for Peace—After Long Waiting—Prospect of Supply.

IN April, 1783, exactly eight years after the first blood was spilled at Lexington, peace was proclaimed to the American army by order of the commander-in-chief. The Conference which met the next month appointed two days for public thanksgiving for the peace established, and for "the revival of the work of God which had taken place among us." This year eleven new circuits were added, one of which is Cumberland and Holstein; and two old stations restored to the list which had for some years been left off—New York and Norfolk. There were now thirty-nine circuits in all, and eighty-five preachers to travel them. Besides the nineteen preachers admitted on trial this year, an increase of one thousand nine hundred and thirty-five members was reported—making a total of thirteen thousand seven hundred and forty.\* Other Christian denominations had decreased, and some had been well-nigh extinguished during the war, but Methodism had increased fivefold. Rocked in the cradle of revolution, it was hardy. With the new republic, it was ready for setting out upon its unexampled career.

The question of the ordinances cannot longer be postponed. We have seen how Strawbridge believed, and acted upon the belief, that under the circumstances his commission to preach, which he had received from the Lord Jesus, carried with it the authority to baptize also, and to give the Lord's Supper to those who had believed on Him, by his ministry. Though the first "rule" of the first Annual Conference seems absolute, as recorded in their brief Minutes, yet we learn from Asbury's note that it was adopted with the understanding that "no preacher in our Connection shall be permitted to administer the ordinances at this time except Mr. Strawbridge, and he under the particular direction of the Assistant."

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\*There were now but one thousand six hundred and twenty-three Methodists north of Mason and Dixon's line, twelve thousand one hundred and seventeen south of it. (Stevens's History, Vol. II.)

The people more and more clamored for the sacraments at the hands of their pastors. There were no Wesleys, Grimshaws, Piers, Perronets, Creightons, Fletchers, and other godly clergy, going in and out to supply this demand. Even the loose and immoral clergy of the Established Church were few and far between; and at the sound of war, being mostly foreigners, they deserted the country. Unless the kingdom of heaven were a close corporation, with the Bishop of London, three thousand miles away, at its head, these American Methodists could not see why they should be deprived of a whole gospel. They had a well-defined theological system, a pure discipline, a sound experience, a holy ministry, a compact organism, and an edifying Christian fellowship—why must they wait on the pleasure of men who could not understand their distant situation, or sympathize with their wants, for the sacraments? Intelligent and serious people, thus conditioned, would be likely to appreciate the figment of apostolical succession, and the theory of ecclesiasticism that hangs on it, at its true worth. The trained conservatism of Wesleyan Methodists triumphed, though it bore hard upon them. They waited until all could be united in measures of relief, and until relief could come in regular order.

The Minutes do not show it, but the journals of the old preachers do, that this matter came up at all of the Annual Conferences. It was pressed in the fifth session held at Deer Creek, in Harford county, Maryland, 1777. Says one chronicler: "The question, 'What shall be done with respect to the ordinances?' was asked. 'Let the preachers pursue the old plan as from the beginning,' was the answer. It was further asked, 'What alteration may we make in our original plan?' And the answer was, 'Our next Conference will, if God permit, show us more clearly.'" It was debated, but the decision was suspended till the next Conference, which was appointed to be held in the following May in Leesburg, Virginia. Thomas Rankin presided over this session. It was his last, and doubtless he bore to Wesley a faithful account of the pressure on this subject: that "the exigence of necessity" was upon the American Methodists, which even in the estimation of such a Churchman as the "Judicious Hooker" would justly constrain them "to leave the usual ways which otherwise they would willingly keep." His words described and covered their case: "Howbeit, as the ordinary course is ordinarily in all



things to be observed, so it may be in some cases not unnecessary that we decline from the ordinary ways."

The sixth Annual Conference began at Leesburg, 1778. It was the first session held in that province, then comprising nearly two-thirds of the membership. Rankin had left; Asbury was in seclusion; and William Watters, the senior native itinerant, presided, though only twenty-seven years old. He says of the session:

Having no old preachers with us, we were as orphans bereft of our spiritual parents; but though young and inexperienced in business, the Lord looked graciously upon us, and had the uppermost seat in all our hearts, and of course in our meeting. It was also submitted to the consideration of this Conference whether in our present situation, of having but few ministers left in many of our parishes to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, we should not administer them ourselves; for as yet we had not the ordinances among us, but were dependent on other denominations for them, some receiving them from the Presbyterians, but the greater part from the Church of England. In fact, we considered ourselves, at this time, as belonging to the Church of England. After much conversation on the subject, it was unanimously agreed to lay it over for the determination of the next Conference, to be held [in Fluvanna county] 19th of May.

Asbury, aware of the unwelcome fact that the next Conference would be one of action on the vexed question, called—at Judge White's in Delaware, where he enjoyed freedom from molestation—a *quasi* Conference of all the preachers north of the Potomac, in April, 1779; Watters, alone, from the southern side was with them. Anticipating the proceedings at Fluvanna, the question was asked, "Shall we guard against a separation from the Church direct or indirect?" and answered, "By all means." Asbury says: "As we had great reason to fear that our brethren to the southward were in danger of separating from us, we wrote them a soft, healing epistle." This "preparatory Conference," as Lee calls it, appointed its next session to be held at Baltimore. Watters bore the healing letter to the regular Conference in Fluvanna county, Virginia, convened at Brokenback Church, in May. When the postponed question, "Shall we administer the ordinances?" came up, it was decided in the affirmative. Philip Gatch presided, and his journal gives the conclusions reached, embodied in a series of questions and answers:

"What are our reasons for taking up the administration of the ordinances? Answer: Because the Episcopal Establishment is now dissolved, and, therefore, in almost all our circuits the members are without the ordinances."

Philip Gatch, Reuben Ellis, and James Foster were appointed a presbytery: "First, to administer the ordinances themselves; second, to authorize any other preacher or preachers, approved of by them, by the form of laying on of hands." After going through the usual schedule of business, the Conference adjourned to meet next year in Manakintown, Powhattan county, Virginia.

The new plan was put in operation at once. The committee ordained each other, and set apart other preachers, "that they might administer the holy ordinances of the Church of Christ." Their labors were greatly blessed, many souls were gathered into the Church, "and Christians were very lively in religion." Jesse Lee says: "The preachers thus ordained went forth preaching the gospel in their circuits as formerly, and administered the sacraments wherever they went, provided the people were willing to partake with them. Most of our preachers in the South fell in with this new plan; and as the leaders of the party were very zealous, and the greater part of them very pious men, the private members were influenced by them and pretty generally fell in with their measures; however, some of the old Methodists would not commune with them, but steadily adhered to their old customs. The preachers north of Virginia were opposed to this step, so hastily taken by their brethren in the South, and made a stand against it, believing that unless a stop could be put to this new mode of proceeding a separation would take place among the preachers and the people. There was great cause to fear a division, and both parties trembled for the ark of God, and shuddered at the thought of dividing the Church of Christ." A few preachers, who dissented from the action of the Conference, took their stations north of the Potomac, among those that agreed with them on this question.

Asbury left his retreat in Delaware, and met some of the preachers at Baltimore, on the 24th of April, and thus anticipated the Virginia session by two weeks. Freeborn Garrettson says: "The next Conference was appointed to be held at Manakintown, Virginia, May, 1780. Prior to this Conference we Northern preachers thought it expedient, for our own convenience, to hold one in Baltimore, at which Messrs. Asbury, Watters, and Garrettson were appointed as delegates to the Virginia Conference, to bring them back if possible to our original usages. The proposition that we made to them was that they should suspend the admin-

istration of the ordinances for one year; in the meanwhile we would consult Mr. Wesley, and in the following May we would have a union Conference in Baltimore, and abide by his judgment. To this proposal they unanimously agreed; and a letter, containing a circumstantial account of the case, written by John Dickens, was signed and sent to Mr. Wesley." Garrettson, one of the committee, tells in few words the result of a long and anxious negotiation. The ground was not yielded without a struggle—not of arguments, for the brethren administering the ordinances were satisfied with their position—but it was a struggle of entreaties and tears, of love and pleas for continued union. The opening breach was, at last, closed by the moderation of the sacramental party, who compromised on a reference of the whole subject, backed by such official statements of the case as had never before been made. Asbury spent the next year pretty much in North Carolina and Virginia with marked effect at conciliation and unity. He also wrote urgently to England.

A few years before, Jarratt had written to Wesley:

Virginia (the land of my nativity) has long groaned through a want of faithful ministers of the gospel. Many souls are perishing for lack of knowledge, many crying for the bread of life, and no man is found to break it to them. We have ninety-five parishes in the Colony, and all—except one—I believe, are supplied with clergymen. But alas! you well understand the rest. I know of but one clergyman of the Church of England [McRoberts] who appears to have the power and spirit of vital religion; for all seek their own, and not the things that are Christ's. Is not our situation, then, truly deplorable? And does it not call loudly upon the friends of Zion on your side the Atlantic to assist us? Many people here heartily join with me in returning our most grateful acknowledgments for the concern you have shown for us in sending so many preachers to the American Colonies. Cannot you do something more for us? Cannot you send us a minister of the Church of England, to be stationed in that one vacant parish I have mentioned? In all probability he would be of great service.

There is doubtless a connection between these foregoing things and the following passage of history: \* "Some friends had written to Mr. Wesley, desiring him to select a young man of piety, wisdom, and understanding, and send him out to America, ordained by one of the English bishops. Having a personal knowledge of Dr. Lowth, Bishop of London, Mr. Wesley asked this favor of him, and was refused. Thereupon, on August 10th, 1780, he wrote a long letter to the bishop, pointing out to him the great evil he had done to spiritual religion in America by that refusal. Be-

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\*Memorials of the Wesley Family, by Stevenson.



fore finishing his letter, Mr. Wesley thus plainly writes his mind: 'Your lordship did not see good to ordain the pious young man I recommended, but your lordship did see good to ordain and send into America other persons who knew something of Greek and Latin, but who knew no more of saving souls than of catching whales. In this respect I mourn for poor America.' " Wesley was trying to avoid innovation, and not to "leave the usual ways," but fortunately he was defeated in his half-measures.

The case of the Established Church, where Methodism most prevailed, was one of collapse, as repeatedly stated by its own historian: "When the Colonists first resorted to arms, Virginia, in her sixty-one counties, contained ninety-five parishes and ninety-one clergymen. When the contest was over, she came out of the war with twenty-three of her ninety-five parishes extinct or forsaken; and of the remaining seventy-two, thirty-four were destitute of ministerial services; while of her ninety-one clergymen, twenty-eight only remained who had lived through the storm. Of these twenty-eight, fifteen only had been enabled to continue in the churches which they supplied prior to the commencement of hostilities." And it was a serious question, far from being solved, whether the fragments of that Church could be gathered up and organized, and perpetuated on its own principles. There was not a bishop of its faith and order in America, and never had been. In May, 1785, a convention was held of what subsequently became the Protestant Episcopal Church, in Virginia, which said, "Since the year 1776 she hath been even without regular government;" and, "We have as yet no resources within ourselves for a succession of the ministry." \*

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\* The attention of the convention was called to the fact that soon after the recognition of Independence "application was made by some young American gentleman to the Bishop of London for orders. Difficulties arose from the operation of certain English statutes requiring of those ordained such engagements as Americans could not take consistently with the allegiance which they owed to their own country." Mr. Adams, then American minister at the Court of St. James, mentioned their case to the Danish minister; it was laid before the theological faculty of Denmark, and relief was offered from that quarter. But the historian informs us that the favor was not accepted at the time on account of the "feeling which was general amongst the Episcopalians throughout this country, that the consecration of American bishops and obtaining of holy orders were not to be sought out of England, until all prospect of obtaining them there should seem hopeless." Adams, a Congregationalist, doubtless had a vein of humor.

A general convention met in Philadelphia, in the fall of 1785, in which a tentative effort was made to form a liturgy and constitution and articles of faith; "it was also recommended by the convention to the several State conventions to elect suitable persons to be recommended to the prelates of England for consecration to the episcopate; and a committee was appointed to address the archbishops and bishops of England, requesting them to confer the episcopal character on such persons as might be elected."\* The spiritual lords of England took their time, and next year a reply was returned granting the request upon certain conditions, among which were: The Americans must insert the Nicene Creed in their liturgy—they had thrown it out, but they put it in again; and also restore the clause, "he descended into hell," in the Apostles' Creed.

New York and Pennsylvania, accordingly, got supplied with the "succession," in the persons of Drs. White and Provost. Dr. Madison went to England, and was consecrated in 1790. How prosperously things went on may be inferred from the fact that when his successor was elected, in 1814, it was done by a mere handful—hardly a quorum. "Seven clergymen were all that could be convened to transact the most important measure which our conventions are ever called on to perform; and this in a territory where once more than ten times seven regularly served at the altar. We look back farther still, and find the Church, after the lapse of two hundred years, numbering about as many ministers as she possessed at the close of the first eight years of her existence."†

It was not to be thought of that vigorous, growing, and evangelical Methodism should be tied on to this moribund body, which at the close of the war, and years afterward, was without organization and without a creed, and did not know how, when, or where it was to obtain a perpetuation of its feeble ministry.

The relations in which the Methodists stood to other Churches, existing before and through the war for independence, and not disrupted by its results, were equally unfavorable for the solution of the sacramental question. Presbyterians and Congregationalists would not baptize their children unless at least one of the parents professed faith in their doctrines, nor admit them to the communion-table unless they became members of their

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\* Hawks's Narrative of Events connected with the Rise and Progress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia. † *Ibid.*, page 246.

Church. Baptists were more rigid still, as they could fellowship none unless they had been baptized by immersion. To neither of these conditions could Methodists submit. Besides, by these denominations, they were regarded as shocking heretics, on account of their opposition to the Calvinistic doctrine of decrees and the final perseverance of the saints.

What shall the Methodists of America now do? We have seen their condition at the proclamation of peace. One more Conference-session brings them down to May, 1784; and adding the results of the year, they have about fifteen thousand members, and forty-six circuits served by eighty-four itinerant preachers. Prepared as they are for great achievements, it is clear they cannot go much farther without completing their ecclesiastical organization. God has bestowed on them all the gifts and graces necessary for the work of salvation; man would withhold from them the authority of its formal signs and seals. They have refrained from exercising that right which "the exigence of necessity," as interpreted by stringent exponents of ecclesiastical polity, would allow; all in deference to regular order and to the preservation of unity—waiting, as they were encouraged to do, for some provision to be made that would compass both. Political events, which none could foresee, have now been determined; the crisis is upon them; they cannot wait longer. They have been standing on a question of expediency, not of right; of regularity, not of validity. The most able and venerable of their itinerants may not, on account of a restraint they hold themselves under, baptize a child or any one of the hundreds of their converts; may not give the simple emblems of the atonement to the thousands of souls they daily feed with the bread of life. The pure word of God is preached, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; but no sacraments are administered, because the Bishop of London refuses to lay his hands on somebody's head! Must these fourscore pastors and fifteen thousand Christians wait indefinitely? Or must they disband? Surely Christian fetichism could not ask so much.

"Dispassionately looked at," says Isaac Taylor, "Wesleyan Methodism did not so much violate as it rendered an homage to the principle of Church order; for if it broke in upon things constituted with a violence that threatened to overthrow whatever might obstruct its course, it presently emerged from its own



confusion, and stood forth as a finished pattern of organization, and an eminent example of the prevalence and supremacy of *rules*. The enlightened adherents of ecclesiastical institutions might well persuade themselves to see in Methodism not, as they are wont, a horrible Vandalism, but the most emphatic recognition that has ever been made of the very core of Church principles, namely, that Christianity cannot subsist, does not develop its genuine powers (longer than for a moment), apart from an ecclesiastical organization."

This "homage to the principle of Church order," having been rendered, is destined soon to be repaid. What has been waited for and prepared for will, in a regular, primitive, and scriptural way, be obtained without any breach of unity, real or apparent; without any possible concession to a hierarchical heresy which had all along been disavowed; and at the same time showing that due respect to the principle of the ministerial transmission of Christian ordinances which was to guard Methodism in the future against the evils of radicalism and confusion. Wesley, long since satisfied of his right and power, as a Presbyter, to ordain preachers for the American Methodists, had hesitated to exercise that authority on the ground of expediency. Now he can say: "By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the British Empire, and erected into independent States. The English Government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical." "No one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all." And reciting the necessities of the situation, he concludes: "Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest."

Let us return to the Old World, and bring up a chapter of history from that side.

## CHAPTER XXV.

Primitive Church Government—Philanthropy—The Sum of all Villainies—Book Reviews on Horseback—West India Missions Planted—Christian Perfection—A Scheme of Absorption—The Calvinistic Controversy—Fletcher's Checks—Deed of Declaration—John Fletcher—Thomas Coke—Ordinations for America.

JOHN WESLEY did much of his reading on horseback, when young, and in his carriage when old. Thus reading, he criticised and digested more books, in history, philosophy, and poetry, than most men get through with in the quiet of a library. Traveling five thousand miles a year, he could not afford to lose the time on the road. Leaving London for Bristol early in 1746, he read a book that had an effect upon his opinions and his life. Lord King was the nephew of the celebrated Locke, who left him a portion of his library. At the age of twenty-two (1691), he published "An Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, that flourished three hundred years after Christ; faithfully collected out of the extant writings of those ages." He rose to be Lord High Chancellor of England, and died in 1734, in reputation for learning, virtue, and humanity. This book was Wesley's companion on his way to Bristol, and after reading it he wrote: "In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draught; but if so, it would follow that bishops and presbyters are essentially of one order, and that originally every Christian congregation was a Church independent of all others."

Stillingfleet's "Irenicum," King's "Primitive Church," and enlargement by observation and reflection—as he associated continually with men who by every token had been "moved of the Holy Ghost to preach," and therefore were in the highest sense God's ministers and ambassadors—caused Wesley's opinions to undergo a change. The Conference of 1747 reveals this: The conversation one day proceeded to show, from the term "*church*" in the New Testament, that a national Church is "a merely political institution;" that the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons generally obtained in the early ages of the Church; but

that uniformity of Church government is not taught in Holy Scripture, and was never attempted till the time of Constantine. One question, with its answer, expresses Wesley's opinion, and that of his coadjutors, on a subject that was coming forward:

"Question: In what age was the divine right of episcopacy first asserted in England? Answer: About the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Till then all bishops and clergy in England continually allowed, and joined in, the ministrations of those who were not episcopally ordained."

In July, 1756, Wesley wrote: "I still believe the episcopal form of Church government to be scriptural and apostolical. I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. But that it is *prescribed* in Scripture, I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of, ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's '*Irenicon*.' I think he has unanswerably proved that neither Christ nor his apostles *prescribe* any particular form of Church government, and that the plea of *divine right* for diocesan episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive Church." He preferred the Church of England, not because he thought it the only Church, but because, upon the whole, he thought it the best. The charm of apostolic succession is dispelled, so soon as he gets that venerable Romish fetich in position to be looked at through a dry light, and to be investigated as other subjects are investigated. Indeed, in reference to this, Wesley wrote (in 1761): "I never could see it proved; and I am persuaded I never shall." And later still was his well-known and oft-quoted utterance: "I firmly believe I am a scriptural *episcopos*, as much as any man in England, or in Europe. For the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove."

As a presbyter in authority, or a providential bishop, he employed preachers, and set them apart to the sacred office. It is true that it was several years before he began to use the imposition of hands; but that was a mere *circumstance*, not the *essence* of ministerial ordination. Richard Watson observes:

It has been generally supposed that Mr. Wesley did not consider his appointment of preachers without imposition of hands as an *ordination* to the ministry, but only as an irregular employment of laymen in the spiritual office of merely expounding the Scriptures in a case of moral necessity. This is not correct. They were not appointed to expound or preach merely, but were solemnly set apart to the pastoral office, as the Minutes of the Conferences show; nor were they regarded



by him as *laymen*, except when in common parlance they were distinguished from the clergy of the Church; in which case he would have called any Dissenting minister a layman. The Minutes sufficiently show that as to the Church of Christ at large, and as to his own Societies, he regarded the preachers, when fully devoted to the work, not as *laymen*, but as *spiritual* men, and *ministers*; men, as he says, "moved by the Holy Ghost" to preach the gospel, and who after trial were ordained to that and other branches of the pastoral office.

Wesley was a philanthropist. Whatever concerned humanity's welfare, body or soul, concerned him; and his strongest language is called forth by cruelty and oppression. Here is another of his book reviews along the road: "I read a very different book, published by an honest Quaker, on that execrable sum of all villainies, commonly called the Slave Trade. I read of nothing like it in the heathen world, whether ancient or modern; and it infinitely exceeds, in every instance of barbarity, whatever Christian slaves suffer in Mohammedan countries." Here are sentiments in advance of his time; for it was not until fifteen years after this that the "Society for the Suppression of the Slave Trade" was founded. One of the counts in the original indictment drawn by the Colonies, prefacing their Declaration of Independence, was that the English Government, headed by the king, persisted in this trade with all its iniquities, to the disgust and detriment of the American people; and the new Republic prohibited it, under the severest penalties. Wilberforce was coming forward into public life, and, pursuing the line of Wesley's protest, was to earn a place in Westminster Abbey. The visitor of to-day, walking through the aisles of that mausoleum of kings and statesmen and other great ones, may read an inscription on his tombstone ascribing to him the honor of saving his country from "the guilt and shame of the African slave trade."\*

Another book review on horseback shows that Wesley's sympathies were not confined to any race or color: "I read Mr. Bolt's account of the affairs in the East Indies—I suppose much the best that is extant. But what a scene is here opened! What consummate villains, what devils incarnate, were the managers there! What utter strangers to justice, mercy, and truth—to every sentiment of humanity! I believe no heathen history contains a parallel.

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\* The book which Wesley read is supposed to have been one written by Anthony Benezet (1762), a French Protestant, who, after being educated in England, became a Quaker in Philadelphia, and was Whitefield's host when there.

I remember none in all the annals of antiquity; not even the divine Cato or the virtuous Brutus plundered the provinces committed to their charge with such merciless cruelty as the English have plundered the desolated provinces of Indostan."

An interesting event, about 1760, is connected with negro missions. Nathaniel Gilbert, a wealthy planter of the West Indies, visited England; he had heard of Wesley, had read some of his publications, and his visit was in no small degree induced by a desire to make his personal acquaintance. This wish was realized, and he became a Methodist local preacher. An entry in Wesley's journal contains the germ of events: "In the morning, I preached in Mr. Gilbert's house. Two negro servants of his and a mulatto appear to be much awakened. Shall not His saving health be made known to all nations?" Subsequently, he writes: "I rode to Wandsworth, and baptized two negroes belonging to Mr. Gilbert, a gentleman lately come from Antigua. One of these is deeply convinced of sin; the other rejoices in God her Saviour, and is the first African Christian I have known. But shall not our Lord, in due time, have these heathens also 'for his inheritance?'" These were the first of a great multitude.

Nathaniel Gilbert, after spending two years in England, returned to his estate in Antigua. He was an educated and an able man, and for some years had been the speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua. He fitted up a room, placed a pulpit in it, and was soon branded as a madman for preaching to his slaves. A Society was formed at St. John's, and Methodism was fairly started in the West Indian islands. Nathaniel Gilbert died in 1774, eleven years before the appointment of the first Methodist missionaries to Antigua, leaving behind him a Methodist Society of about two hundred members. "On what do you trust?" asked a friend. "On Christ crucified," was the quick response. "Have you peace with God?" He answered, "Unspeakable." "Have you no fear, no doubt?" "None," replied the dying man. Thus died the first West Indian Methodist. The Society was left in a forlorn condition. For several years they were without a minister, but were kept together by two negro women, who met them regularly, and prayed with them.

The Government wishing a ship-carpenter's service at St. John's dock-yard, sent out John Baxter in 1778. A class-leader and local preacher, Baxter soon found the little flock and began

to preach, and had the pleasure of addressing multitudes, and the still greater pleasure of seeing the work of God prosper in his hands. He persevered until the year 1783, when a Methodist chapel was erected—the first ever built in the torrid zone. Although Baxter had devoted only a portion of his time to the work, following his trade while preaching, yet in seven years after his arrival nearly two thousand persons had joined his Society. Such was the state of things when the first Wesleyan missionary arrived. On walking up the town of St. John's, he met Baxter in the street, on his way to the chapel to perform divine service, it being Christmas-day. Although personally strangers, their mutual joy on this unexpected meeting can be better conceived than described.

About 1763 a deep wave of revival passed over the Societies. The peculiar work of the Spirit seemed to be what St. Paul calls "the perfecting of the saints." Many were awakened and converted, but the work of sanctification engaged preachers and people in a special manner. Visiting Ireland in July, Wesley records: "I found three or four and forty in Dublin who seemed to enjoy the pure love of God. At least forty of these had been set at liberty within four months. Some others who had received the same blessing had removed to other parts. A larger number had found remission of sins." In September he was in the west of England, where he writes: "The more I converse with the believers in Cornwall, the more I am convinced that they have sustained great loss for want of hearing the doctrine of Christian perfection clearly and strongly enforced." The bare word, *perfection*, provoked criticism and jests on the part of some who should have known its Bible origin. To a doubting if not a backslidden preacher Wesley wrote at a later day:

Many think they are justified, and are not; but we cannot infer that none are justified. So neither, if many think they are "perfected in love," and are not, will it follow that none are so. Blessed be God, though we set a hundred enthusiasts aside, we are still "encompassed with a cloud of witnesses," who have testified, and do testify, in life and in death, that perfection which I have taught these forty years! This perfection cannot be a delusion, unless the Bible be a delusion too; I mean, loving God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves. I pin down all its opposers to this definition of it. No evasion! No shifting the question! Where is the delusion of this? Either you receive this love, or you do not. If you did, dare you call it a delusion? If you received any thing else, it does not at all affect the question.



In 1759 Wesley published "Thoughts on Christian Perfection." His sermon eighteen years before, on the same subject, thus opens: "There is scarce any expression in Holy Writ which has given more offense than this. The word *perfect* is what many cannot bear. The very sound of it is an abomination to them; and whosoever *preaches perfection* (as the phrase is), that it is attainable in this life, runs great hazard of being accounted by them worse than a heathen and a publican."\*

Proceeding to show in what sense Christians are perfect, and in what sense they are not perfect, he guards against the error of putting Christian perfection so high as to be unattainable, or so low as to allow of "infirmities," so called, which are really sins:

Christian perfection, therefore, does not imply (as some men seem to have imagined) an exemption either from ignorance, or mistake, or infirmities, or temptations. Indeed, it is only another term for holiness. They are two names for the same thing. Thus, every one that is holy is, in the Scripture sense, perfect. Yet we may observe, lastly, that neither in this respect is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no *perfection of degrees*, as it is termed; none which does not admit of a continual increase. So that how much soever any man has attained, or in how high a degree soever he is perfect, he hath still need to "grow in grace," and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God his Saviour.

This perfection is not like that of a tree which flourishes by the sap drawn from its own roots; it is rather like that of a branch, living and bearing fruit while united to the vine, but severed from it, is dried up and withered. The necessity of a Mediator is not excluded, as objectors allege, in their case who are perfected in love; for none feel their dependence on him, in his priestly office, as they do. Christ does not give this salvation separate from, but in and with, himself. Its essence is constant union of the soul with the Saviour. All deviations from the perfect law, whether caused by ignorance, inadvertence, or mistakes of judgment, need atonement. In a letter to a friend (1763), Wesley declares that he can say nothing on the subject of Christian perfection but what he has said already. Nevertheless, at her request, he is willing to add a few words more:

As to the word *perfection*, it is scriptural. Therefore, neither you nor I can in conscience object to it, unless we would send the Holy Ghost to school, and teach him to speak who made the tongue.

By *Christian perfection* I mean (as I have said again and again) the so loving God and our neighbor as to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every

thing give thanks." If that experiences this is scripturally perfect. And if you do not, yet you may experience it; you surely will, if you follow hard after it, for the Scripture cannot be broken.

What, then, does their arguing prove who object against Christian perfection? Absolute or infallible perfection I never contended for; sinless perfection I do not contend for, seeing it is not scriptural. A perfection such as enables a person to fulfill the whole law, and so need not the merits of Christ, I do not acknowledge. I do now and always did protest against it.

But is there no sin in those who are perfect in love? I believe not; but, be that as it may, they feel none—no temper contrary to pure love, while they rejoice, pray, and give thanks continually. Whether sin is suspended or extinguished I will not dispute. It is enough that they feel nothing but love. This you allow we should daily press after; and this is all I contend for.

So important a doctrine came up in the earlier conversations of the Conference. An epitome of it, as held and taught by Wesleyans, may be found in their Minutes. It shows a disposition to approach all who advocate holiness as nearly as possible:

"Question: What is it to be sanctified? Answer: To be renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

"Question: Is faith the condition, or the instrument, of sanctification? Answer: It is both the condition and the instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins. And as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew.

"Question: What is implied in being a perfect Christian? Answer: The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our mind and soul and strength."

"Question: How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us with regard to entire sanctification? Answer: They grant, (1) That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death. (2) That, till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection. (3) That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.

"Question: What do we allow to them? Answer: We grant, (1) That many of those who have died in the faith—yea, the greater part of those we have known—were not sanctified throughout, not made perfect in love, till a little before death. (2) That the term 'sanctified' is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified, were true believers. (3) That by this term alone he rarely (if ever) means saved from all sin. (4) That, consequently, it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the word 'wholly,' 'entirely,' or the like. (5) That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justi-

fied, but very rarely either of or to those who were wholly sanctified. (6) That, consequently, it behooves us to speak in public almost continually of the state of justification; but more rarely, at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

“Question: What, then, is the point wherein we divide? Answer: It is this—whether we should expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death.

“Question: Is there any clear Scripture promise that God will save us from all sin? Answer: There is, ‘He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.’ And to this the apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, ‘Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.’ Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, ‘The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.’

“Question: Does the New Testament afford any further ground for expecting to be saved from all sin? Answer: Undoubtedly it does, both in those prayers and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

“Question: What prayers do you mean? Answer: Prayers for entire sanctification, which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God.

“Question: What command is there to the same effect? Answer: (1) ‘Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’ (2) ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.’ But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

“Question: But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death? Answer: From the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, ‘Thou shalt love God with all thy heart’ cannot mean thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.

“Question: Does not the harshly preaching perfection tend to bring believers into a kind of bondage or slavish fear? Answer: It does. Therefore, we should always place it in the most amiable light, so that it may excite only hope, joy, and desire.”

A perilous crisis was encountered, but safely passed, when the absorption of Methodism was proposed. The proposition



came from friends, and it had this advantage—it seemed to take ground on which Wesley stood at an earlier stage of the religious movement. Walker of Truro, an evangelical and friendly clergyman, pushed this scheme. In a long letter, he details it:

After all these considerations, might not an expedient be found out which might correspond with the word of God and the Church of England, and, at the same time, both remove all objections and render the body of Methodists more useful? I have long and often thought of such a thing. My scheme is this: 1. That as many of the lay preachers as are fit for, and can be procured, ordination, be ordained. 2. That those who remain be not allowed to preach, but be set as inspectors over the Societies, and assistants to them. 3. That they be not moved from place to place, to the end they may be personally acquainted with all the members of such Societies. 4. That their business may be to purge and edify the Societies under their care, to the end that no person be continued a member whose conversation is not orderly and of good report.

If this should be made an objection, that hereby lay preachers would be prevented from preaching abroad, and so much good be put a stop to, I would suggest it to be inquired into, whether this lay preaching hath been so much to the honor or interest of religion or Methodism as may be supposed? I remember, when it first began, I said and thought lay preaching would be the ruin of Methodism.

Wesley replied at large, showing that the scheme would not work at all. Alluding to the arguments of Methodists who advocated bolder measures and open dissent, he says: "I will freely acknowledge that I cannot answer these arguments to my own satisfaction. As yet we have not taken one step farther than we were convinced was our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this that we have preached abroad, prayed *extempore*, formed Societies, and permitted preachers who were not episcopally ordained. And were we pressed on this side, were there no alternative allowed, we should judge it our bounden duty rather wholly to separate from the Church than to give up any one of these points; therefore, if we cannot stop a separation without stopping lay preachers, the case is clear, we cannot stop it at all."

"Lay preachers" had given every token of being "moved by the Holy Ghost." Must he stop them, because not *episcopally* ordained? He states the case to the rector of Truro: "What authority have I to forbid their doing what I believe God has called them to do? I apprehend, indeed, that there ought, if possible, to be both an outward and inward call to this work; yet, if one of the two be supposed wanting, I had rather want the outward than the inward call. I rejoice that I am called to

preach the gospel both by God and man. Yet, I acknowledge, I had rather have the Divine without the human than the human without the Divine call."

The next scheme was not so sweeping, but the more dangerous from its moderation. Wesley had addressed a circular to fifty clergymen, desiring their counsel and coöperation in carrying on the revival. "The great point," he says, "I now labored for was a good understanding with all our brethren of the clergy, who are heartily engaged in propagating vital religion." A dozen of the clergymen, to whom the circular had been sent, attended the Conference. John Pawson tells for what purpose. The reader must not be startled at the term *awakened* minister:

In the year 1764 twelve of those gentlemen attended our Conference in Bristol, in order to prevail with Mr. Wesley to withdraw the preachers from every parish where there was an awakened minister; and Mr. Charles Wesley honestly told us that if he was a settled minister in any particular place, we should not preach there. To whom Mr. Hampson replied, "I would preach there, and never ask your leave, and should have as good a right to do so as you would have." Mr. Charles Wesley's answer was in a strain of High-church eloquence indeed! but I leave it. His prediction was never accomplished, nor ever can be. However, these gentlemen failed in their attempt that time; Mr. Wesley would not give up his Societies to them."

The difference between the two Wesleys on this subject appears to have been this: With Charles, adherence to the Church was paramount; every thing else was of secondary importance. With John, the grand ruling idea was the salvation of sinners; and although anxious to remain in union with the Church, and to keep his Societies from separating from it, he subjected every thing to the proclamation of the gospel and the salvation of men. "Church or no Church," he observes in one of his letters to Charles, "we must attend to the work of saving souls." Besides other unanswerable objections to the withdrawing plan was this: There might, at one time, be a godly incumbent of a parish; but who could tell the character of his successor? Instead of taking care of the abandoned Societies, he might mock and destroy them. The successor of Grimshaw would not allow Wesley to occupy his pulpit. Such changes for the worse were common in a State Church, where the right of presentation to the vacant parish was a property often held by godless men.

(Methodism, step by step, was forced into its true position.) It must not be stopped; it could not be absorbed into the Establish-

ment at this stage; and the experience of Lady Huntingdon had shown that it would not be allowed, as a self-governed revival organization, to exist inside the Establishment. Already Wesleyan chapels and preachers were under necessity of getting licensed according to the Act of Toleration. Nothing was left, if Methodism be true to God and its mission, but to organize outside of the Establishment. If it cannot act as a leaven within that body, it may be an uplifting lever outside of it. In the course of time the hierarchy saw the blunder they had committed, but they saw it too late.

Kingswood School still gave trouble. In March, 1766, on his long journey to the north, coming to Bristol, Wesley wrote: "I rode to Kingswood, and having told my whole mind to the masters and servants, spoke to the children in a far stronger manner than ever I did before. I will kill or cure. I will have one or the other; a Christian school or none at all." At another time he resolved to "mend it or end it." His latter years were cheered by success; on coming to this child of his love, he could say: "I found the school in excellent order. It is now one of the pleasantest spots in England. I found all things just according to my desire; the rules being well observed, and the whole behavior of the children showing that they were now managed with the wisdom that cometh from above." At his last visit, he wrote: "I went over to Kingswood; sweet recess! where every thing is now just as I wish."

There was a well-meant effort by Wesley to keep as near to Whitefield as possible, when a doctrinal divergence began to appear between them. Antinomianism, both of mystic and Calvinistic origin, gave him trouble; but his testimony against it was unsparing. The Minutes of 1770 contained, therefore, the following passages:

We said, in 1744, "We have leaned too much toward Calvinism." Wherein?

With regard to man's faithfulness. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression. And we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, on his authority, that if a man is not "faithful in the unrighteous mammon," God will not give "him the true riches."

We have received it as a maxim that "a man is to do nothing in order to justification." Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favor with God should "cease from evil, and learn to do well." Whoever repents should do "works meet for repentance." And if this is not in order to find favor, what does he do them for?



Does not talking of a justified or a sanctified state tend to mislead men? almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, "according to our works;" according to the whole of our inward tempers, and our outward behavior.

These expressions, with others touching the acceptance of the heathen who "fear God and work righteousness," excited suspicion among some who held "the doctrines of grace." The Calvinistic wing of Methodism took up the matter warmly. The outcry of heresy was raised, as though Wesley and his preachers had asserted that we are saved by the merit of works and not entirely by that of Christ. The Countess of Huntingdon was alarmed; and the Rev. Walter Shirley, her kinsman and chaplain, wrote a "Circular Letter" to all the serious clergy, inviting them to go in a body to the ensuing Conference, and "insist upon a formal recantation of the said Minutes, and in case of a refusal, to sign and publish their protest against them." He and a few others accordingly attended the Bristol Conference (1771), where, says Wesley, "we had more preachers than usual, in consequence of Mr. Shirley's 'Circular Letter.' At ten on Thursday morning he came, with nine or ten of his friends. We conversed freely for about two hours; and I believe they were satisfied that we were not such 'dreadful heretics' as they imagined, but were tolerably sound in the faith."

As evangelical co-laborers, the Calvinistic Methodists were entitled to an explanation (not a "recantation"); but they did not get it until they approached the Conference respectfully. Shirley's "Circular Letter" was naturally resented by Wesley, as being published before any explanations respecting the Minutes had been asked; and also from its assuming that he and the clergy who might obey his summons had the right to come into the Conference, and to demand a recantation. This led Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley to address explanatory letters to Mr. Wesley. The evening before the Conference met, Lady Huntingdon says: "As you and your friends, and many others, have objected to the mode of the application to you in Conference, as an arbitrary way of proceeding, we wish to retract what a more deliberate consideration might have prevented," etc. Mr. Shirley's letter acknowledges "that the 'Circular' was too hastily drawn up, and improperly expressed; and, therefore, for the offensive expressions in it we desire we may be hereby under-

stood to make a very suitable submission to you." On this explanation, Mr. Shirley and his friends were invited by Wesley to come to the Conference on the third day of its sitting. The substance of the explanation was: "Whereas the doctrinal points in the Minutes of a Conference, held in London, August 7, 1770, have been understood to favor 'justification by works,' now the Rev. John Wesley and others, assembled in Conference, do declare that we had no such meaning, and that we abhor the doctrine of 'justification by works' as a most perilous and abominable doctrine." And the reply was that the "declaration has convinced Mr. Shirley he had mistaken the meaning of the doctrinal points in the Minutes of the Conference held in London, August 7, 1770."

Out of this affair grew a memorable controversy that ran through years. The literature of it is a permanent and rich contribution to the theology of Arminian Methodism. John Fletcher came forward as the defender of Wesley. He issued "The First Check to Antinomianism;" but he did not content himself with defending the doctrinal consistency and orthodoxy of Wesley, so far merely as the Minutes were concerned. He thoroughly discussed various other points of the quinquarticular controversy; and he, as well as Wesley, was quickly assailed by a number of replies, not couched in elegant or fraternal language.\*

Richard Watson thus sums up and estimates the result of the controversy:

Mr. Fletcher's skill and admirable temper so fully fitted him to conduct the dispute which had arisen that Mr. Wesley left the contest chiefly to him, and calmly pursued his labors; and the whole issued in a series of publications, from the pen of the Vicar of Madeley, which, as a whole, can scarcely be too highly praised or valued. While the language endures, they will effectually operate as checks to Antinomianism in every subtle form which it may assume; and present the pure and beautiful system of evangelical truth, as well guarded on the other hand against Pelagian self-sufficiency. The Rev. Augustus Toplady, Mr. (afterward Sir Richard) Hill, and his brother, the Rev. Rowland Hill, with the Rev. John Berridge, were his principal antagonists; but his learning, his acuteness, his brilliant talent at illustrating an argument, and, above all, the hallowed spirit in which he conducted the controversy, gave him a mighty superiority over his opponents; and, although there will be a difference of opinion, according to the sys-

\* This abusive style the Calvinists even of that day disapproved of. Rowland Hill appears to have incurred the displeasure of some of his brethren; for, in a second edition of his "Gentle Strictures," he explains himself—lamely enough—that when he called Wesley "wretch," and "miscreant," they must remember that "wretch" means "an unhappy person," and "miscreant," "one whose belief is wrong!"

tems which different readers have adopted, as to the side on which the victory of argument remains, there can be none as to which bore away the prize of temper.

This controversy, painful as it was in many respects, and the cause of much unhallowed joy to the profane wits of the day, who were not a little gratified at this exhibition of what they termed "spiritual gladiatorship," has been productive of important consequences in this country. It showed to the pious and moderate Calvinists how well the richest views of evangelical truth could be united with Arminianism; and it effected, by its bold and fearless exhibition of the logical consequences of the doctrines of the decrees, much greater moderation in those who still admitted them, and gave birth to some softened modifications of Calvinism in the age that followed—an effect which has remained to this day. The disputes on these subjects have, since that time, been less frequent, and more temperate; nor have good men so much labored to depart to the greatest distance from each other as to find a ground on which they could make the nearest approaches. This has been especially the case between the Methodists and evangelical Dissenters. Of Calvinism, since the period of this controversy, the Methodist preachers and Societies have been in no danger; so powerful and complete was its effect upon them. At no Conference, since that of 1770, has it been necessary again to ask, "Wherein have we leaned too much to Calvinism?"

In the "Short History of the People called Methodists," Wesley says: "March 13, 1757, finding myself weak at Snowfields, I prayed that God, if he saw good, would send me help at the chapels. He did so. As soon as I had done preaching Mr. Fletcher came, who had just then been ordained priest, and hastened to the chapel on purpose to assist me, as he supposed me to be alone. How wonderful are the ways of God! When my bodily strength failed, and no clergyman in England was able and willing to assist me, he sent me help from the mountains of Switzerland; and a helpmeet for me in every respect. Where could I have found such another?"

John William de la Flechere was born in Nyon, in 1729, descended of a noble Savoyard family. Religiously inclined from his youth, he was designed by his parents for the Church. He won distinguished success in the University of Geneva, but abandoned his intention of entering the ministry, feeling unable conscientiously to subscribe to the Calvinistic doctrines of the Church of his country. His purpose was turned to a military life; but disappointed therein, he came to England, and engaged as a tutor in a family whose winters were spent in London, where he heard the gospel to his conviction and conversion. He joined a Methodist class in London, and continued for some time in the metropolis assisting Wesley, and preaching and administering the Lord's Supper at Lady Huntingdon's mansion. The patron,



in whose family he had been tutor, offered him the living of Dunham—parish small, labor light, and income good (£400). But Fletcher had preached several times in the populous parish of Madeley, and had conceived such sympathy for its wretched inhabitants that he declined the offer of Dunham as affording “too much money and too little work.” His patron gave Dunham to the Vicar of Madeley, and secured the latter for him, with more work and less pay. He thus became settled in the obscure parish which his name has rendered familiar to the Protestant world. It was a region of mines and manufactures, with debased population, and small congregation. For months he went about his parish on the Sabbath morning, with bell in hand, to awake such as excused their neglect of worship by alleging that they could not wake early enough to prepare their families for the service.

With Wesley he counseled and coöperated, while maintaining the independent position of his vicarage: this gave great advantage to his defenses of Wesleyan doctrine and polity. On the breaking out of the Calvinistic controversy, Lady Huntingdon dismissed Benson, the head of Trevecca College, because he did not believe the doctrine of absolute predestination. Fletcher wrote her that he did hold “the possibility of salvation for all men. If this is what you call Mr. Wesley’s opinion and Arminianism, and if every Arminian must quit the college, I am actually discharged; for, in my present view of things, I must hold that sentiment if I believe that the Bible is true and that God is love.” And he resigned the presidency of the college. In the controversy that followed, his saintliness of character was admitted even by opponents. Speaking of a call he made on Fletcher during this discussion, a visitor remarks, “I went to see a man with one foot in the grave, but found him with one foot in *heaven*.” As he entered the parsonage twenty years after, Berridge ran and took him in his arms, exclaiming: “My dear brother, this is indeed a satisfaction I never expected! How could we write against each other, when we both aim at the same thing, the glory of God and the good of souls?”

Wesley desired Fletcher, his coadjutor, to be his successor also; but his health gave way, and he modestly doubted his own fitness for such a heavy care. He was married in 1781 to Mary Bosanquet, and thus two saintly lives were given, in one volume, to Christian biography. His death occurred four years afterward.

The year the health of John Fletcher failed, Wesley formed an acquaintance with Thomas Coke. Born and educated at Brecon, Wales, Coke was now twenty-nine years of age. He had taken his degrees at Oxford, had received episcopal ordination, and was curate at South Petherton. A friend loaned him the sermons and journals of Wesley, and the "Checks" of Fletcher. These books were, to use his own words, "the blessed means of bringing me among the despised people called Methodists, with whom, God being my helper, I am determined to live and die." Wesley writes: "1776, August 13.—I preached at Taunton, and afterward went with Mr. Brown to Kingston. Here I found a clergyman, Dr. Coke, late a gentleman commoner of Jesus College, Oxford, who came twenty miles on purpose to meet me. I had much conversation with him; and a union then began which, I trust, shall never end." Thomas Maxfield, who, having obtained ordination, had left Wesley and was pastor of an Independent congregation near Petherton, was useful to the awakened curate in explaining to him the way of salvation. Another circumstance happened at this time that greatly assisted Dr. Coke in obtaining peace of mind. He had occasion to visit a wealthy family in Devonshire, and among the laborers employed there was a pious man, a member of the Methodist Society, who was the leader of a small class. The Doctor found him out, and they conversed very freely on the nature of pardon and the evidences that accompany it, the witness of the Spirit, and the manner in which we must come to God. After conversation they joined in prayer, and were so united in spirit that Dr. Coke wished to know something more about the Methodists, of whom he had heard so many strange reports.

From the pulpit he soon announced the blessing he had experienced, and his language partook of the fervor of his spirit. His custom of reading sermons was succeeded by the more natural and appropriate practice of preaching extemporaneously. God was pleased to acknowledge his servant, by attending his word with a peculiar unction, and under his first extemporary sermon three souls were awakened. Preaching without a book, the earnestness of his exhortations, the plainness of his reproofs, and his establishing evening lectures in the village, all conspired to give offense, and to create a general ferment in the parish. As he had introduced into the church the practice of singing

hymns, the choir was greatly disgusted, and all parties joined in the clamor against him. The rector dismissed him with every circumstance of indignity, and to complete the triumph of his enemies the parish bells chimed out the curate who had been dubbed a Methodist.

At the Conference of 1778, Thomas Coke was stationed in London. The report of his conversion, of his energetic preaching, and his ill treatment at Petherton, reached London before his appointment there, and excited strong prepossessions in his favor. His popularity in London was great, his congregations large, and the Lord owned and blessed his labors with success. In the year 1780 Coke began to travel extensively, under the direction of Wesley, visiting and regulating the Societies; and from this time he continued traveling almost incessantly, by land or water, until death ended his earthly career. In the course of his journeyings he visited Petherton. During his absence, time had wrought a change in the disposition of the inhabitants, and procured for him a gratifying reception. "Well," said some of his former opponents, "we *chimed* him out, and now we will atone for our error by *ringing* him in."

From the increase of the Societies in Ireland, Wesley judged it necessary to hold a separate Conference for the Irish preachers. The first session was in Dublin, 1782. By Wesley's direction, Coke presided in it; and from this time for nearly thirty years he generally filled the presidential chair in the Irish Conference, and when not president of the British Conference, he was accustomed to act as its secretary. Wesley called him his right-hand.

To Dr. Coke is credited the suggestion which secured the Wesleyan chapels, and consequently the economy of Wesleyan Methodism, after the death of the Founder. Most of the trust deeds secured the right of appointing preachers for the chapels to him, while many vested that right in the Conference. But who were the Conference? It was composed of such preachers as Mr. Wesley called together to counsel with him, and none others. At his death the word Conference would have no legal meaning. This result many feared, and some hoped, would prove fatal to the union of the Societies. Wesley, after legal advice, prepared a "Deed of Declaration," constituting one hundred preachers, whom he named therein, the Conference of the people called



Methodists—making provision for the filling of vacancies and for their annual meeting, and defining their duties and powers so as to secure the occupancy of the meeting-houses, and other Society property, to the Methodists, according to the original design. This deed being recorded in the High Court of Chancery, the questions of identity, doctrine, and government were settled.

The "Deed" has stood the test of litigation and of revolution. It has proved a sheet-anchor. Of course preachers who were expecting to settle down into snug berths of Independency upon the dissolution of the United Society were disappointed, as also were trustees, who meant to call and govern pastors; and land proprietors, who were waiting for the buildings and grounds to revert. A few itinerants, of age and standing, whose names were not included in the legal hundred, were displeased and withdrew. Whitehead and Hampson, wrote, each in his own style, a history of Wesley and Methodism, from which the enemies of both have not ceased, to this day, to supply themselves with weapons offensive. But the "Deed" was accepted by the great body of preachers and people as a timely and most judicious instrument. After some perturbations, the practical good sense and constitution-abiding temper which are characteristic of Englishmen prevailed, and Wesleyan Methodism settled down to its great mission.

The "Deed of Declaration," while conserving the doctrinal and itinerant plan under which Methodism had worked for more than forty years, proved sufficiently flexible, under the patient and wise handling of Englishmen, for the expansion of educational and missionary operations to an extent not dreamed of by Wesley; and also, in late years, for the admission of a practical system of lay representation at the Annual Conference. Instead of being scattered at the death of their Founder, the Societies struck their roots deeper, and extended their branches wider. Says Thomas Jackson: "Extensive revivals broke out in several places; new Societies were formed, and older ones were quickened and augmented; and many chapels, of various sizes, were erected and enlarged. Within ten years after Mr. Wesley's death, the Societies were increased in Great Britain alone more than forty thousand members; and in twenty years, they were increased upward of one hundred thousand."

At the British Conference of 1784, the "Deed of Declaration," which gave consistency and permanence to Methodism at home,

was announced as enrolled and in operation, and at the same Conference was announced the carrying out of another measure of equal importance to Methodism in America. It had been under consideration and virtually determined on before; but Fletcher was present with Wesley and Coke at the Leeds Conference, and there, with his assistance, the details were settled.

The zeal, the ability, and the piety which Coke had for several years manifested, both in England and Ireland, combined to point him out as the most suitable person to engage in this arduous work, and to assume that character with which Wesley was about to invest him. Accordingly, in the month of February, 1784, he called Coke into his private chamber, and, after some preparatory observations, introduced the important subject to him in nearly the following manner:

That, as the Revolution in America had separated the United States from the mother country forever, and the Episcopal Establishment was utterly abolished, the Societies had been represented to him in a most deplorable condition. That an appeal had also been made to him through Mr. Asbury, in which he was requested to provide for them some mode of Church government suited to their exigences; and that having long and seriously revolved the subject in his thoughts, he intended to adopt the plan which he was now about to unfold. That as he had invariably endeavored, in every step he had taken, to keep as closely to the Bible as possible, so, on the present occasion, he hoped he was not about to deviate from it. That, keeping his eyes upon the conduct of the primitive Churches in the ages of unadulterated Christianity, he had much admired the mode of ordaining bishops which the Church of Alexandria had practiced. That to preserve its purity, that Church would never suffer the interference of a foreign bishop in any of their ordinations; but that the presbyters of that venerable apostolic Church, on the death of a bishop, exercised the right of ordaining another from their own body, by the laying on of their own hands; and that this practice continued among them for two hundred years, till the days of Dionysius. And finally, that, being himself a presbyter, he wished Dr. Coke to accept ordination from his hands, and to proceed in that character to the continent of America, to superintend the Societies in the United States.\*

Coke was startled at a measure so unprecedented in modern days, and time was allowed him to deliberate on it. Two months, however, had scarcely elapsed, before he wrote to Mr. Wesley, informing him that he was ready to coöperate with him. At the ensuing Conference (Leeds, 1784), Wesley stated his intention to the preachers present. Whatcoat and Vasey offered their services to accompany Dr. Coke in the character of missionaries. It is to this measure that Wesley alludes in his journal: "On

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\* Life of Coke, by Samuel Drew, page 64.

Wednesday, September 1st, being now clear in my own mind, I took a step which I had long weighed."

The Conference at Leeds ended, Wesley repaired to Bristol, and Coke to London to make arrangements for his departure. He had not, however, been long in London, before he received a letter from Wesley, requesting him to repair immediately to Bristol, and to bring with him the Rev. Mr. Creighton, a regularly ordained minister, who was then officiating in Wesley's chapels in London, and assisting him in various branches of his ministerial duties. (The Doctor and Mr. Creighton accordingly met him in Bristol, when, with their assistance, he ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey presbyters for America, having first ordained them deacons; and being peculiarly attached to every rite of the Church of England, he afterward ordained Dr. Coke a superintendent, or bishop, being assisted therein by presbyters, according to the usual order, and gave him letters of ordination under his hand and seal.) Of these letters of ordination the following is a copy, carefully transcribed from the original in Wesley's own handwriting:

To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College, in Oxford, Presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting.

Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to the usage of the said Church; and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers:

Know all men that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart, as a Superintendent, by the imposition of my hands, and prayer (being assisted by other ordained ministers), Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, a Presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

JOHN WESLEY.

Wesley wrote the following letter, which Dr. Coke was directed to print and circulate among the Societies on his arrival in America, and which, accordingly, was printed and circulated in America, and made the basis of the further action that was taken after his arrival. It possesses high historical value and importance:



“BRISTOL, September 10, 1784.

*“To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America.*

“By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the mother country, and erected into independent States. The English Government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the States of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the provincial assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice; and in compliance with their desire, I have drawn up a little sketch.

“Lord King’s account of the primitive Church convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused; not only for peace’s sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the national Church, to which I belonged.

“But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish ministers; so that for some hundreds of miles together there is none either to baptize or administer the Lord’s Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man’s right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

“I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord’s Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England (I think the best constituted national Church in the world), which I advise all the traveling preachers to use on the Lord’s-day in all the congregations, reading the litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord’s-day.

"If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding these poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

"It has indeed been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object: 1. I desired the Bishop of London to ordain one, but could not prevail. 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay. 3. If they would ordain them now, they would expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us! 4. As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the State and the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free. JOHN WESLEY."

The abridgment of the English liturgy, alluded to in the above paper, was not only prepared but printed by Wesley, and sent out by Coke. Besides containing the "Sunday service," it contained forms for the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper, for marriage and burial, and also forms for the ordination of deacons, elders, and superintendents—the three distinct offices of the ministry in an episcopally constituted Church. The name of bishop, in the English ordinal, is changed to superintendent, and the name of presbyter, or priest, to elder—the new names being, in both cases, synonymous with the old ones, and the relative duties the same.

Being now prepared for the great work before him, Thomas Coke, with his companions, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, embarked on board a vessel bound to New York. They sailed from Bristol on the 18th of September.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

The Christmas Conference—Events Before and After—Organization and Church Extension—Asbury Crossing the Mountains—Methodism Planted on the Southern Frontier—On the Western—On the Northern—And in Nova Scotia.

**B**ISHOP COKE and the two accompanying presbyters landed at New York, November 3, 1784, and were welcomed by John Dickins, the Methodist preacher of the city. He had been one of the Fluvanna Conference. The letter, four years before, setting forth the preachers' appeal to the Founder of Methodism for help had been drawn by his hand. The helpers had come, and the provisions for the case were so complete and satisfactory that he not only approved them but wished to publish the whole scheme at once, for the pleasure of all concerned. It was deemed expedient, however, to make no further disclosure till Asbury could be consulted.

Preaching and traveling toward the South, they passed through Philadelphia, and came to Wilmington, to Dover, and to a chapel where Asbury had a quarterly-meeting appointed. He was coming up from the peninsula to hold it. Judge Barratt contributed so liberally to the building of this first chapel in Delaware that it was called by his name. ¶ Of brick, forty-eight by forty-two feet, with galleries and a vestry, it was long considered the best country chapel in Methodism. ♥ It required influence as well as money to build it; for when so substantial a structure was going up, one of the Sanballats of the community declared it was "unnecessary to provide such a place of worship for the Methodists, for by the time the war is over a corn-crib will hold them all." On Sunday, November 14, Coke arrived, with Whatcoat, at Barratt's Chapel. He is in the midst of new and interesting scenes, and describes them:

In this chapel in the midst of a forest, I had a noble congregation, to whom I endeavored to set forth the Redeemer as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. After the sermon, a plain, robust man came up to me in the pulpit and kissed me. I thought it could be no other than Mr. Asbury, and I was not deceived. I administered the sacrament, after preaching, to five or six hundred communicants, and held a love-feast. It was the best season I ever knew, except one at Charlemont in Ireland. After dinner Mr. Asbury and I had a pri-



vate conversation on the future management of our affairs in America. He informed me that he had received some intimations of my arrival on the continent, and had collected a considerable number of the preachers to form a council, and if they were of opinion that it would be expedient immediately to call a Conference, it should be done. They were accordingly sent for, and, after debate, were unanimously of that opinion. We therefore sent off Freeborn Garrettson, like an arrow, from north to south, directing him to send messengers to the right and left, and to gather all the preachers together at Baltimore on Christmas-eve. Mr. Asbury has also drawn up for me a route of about a thousand miles in the meantime. He has given me his black (Harry by name), and borrowed an excellent horse for me. I exceedingly reverence Mr. Asbury; he has so much of wisdom and consideration, so much meekness and love; and under all this, though hardly to be perceived, so much command and authority. He and I had agreed to use our joint endeavors to establish a school or college. I baptized here thirty or forty infants, and seven adults. We had indeed a precious time at the baptism of the adults.

Asbury knew not that Coke was present till he arrived at the chapel. The occasion was a quarterly-meeting of the circuit, and fifteen of the preachers and a host of the laity were there. Ezekiel Cooper, who became an eminent preacher, was a spectator of the scene, and says: "While Coke was preaching, Asbury came into the congregation. A solemn pause and deep silence took place at the close of the sermon, as an interval for introduction and salutation. Asbury and Coke, with hearts full of brotherly love, approached, embraced, and saluted each other. The other preachers, at the same time, were melted into sympathy and tears. (The congregation also caught the glowing emotion, and the whole assembly, as if struck with a shock of heavenly electricity, burst into a flood of tears.) Every heart appeared overflowing with love and fellowship, and an ecstasy of joy and gladness ensued.' I can never forget the affecting scene. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered, by the Doctor and Whatcoat, to several hundred, and it was a blessed season to many souls, while in the holy ordinance they discerned, through faith, the Lord's body, and showed forth his death. It is the more affecting to my memory, as it was the first time I ever partook of the Lord's Supper, and the first time that the ordinance was ever administered among the Methodists by their own regularly ordained preachers."

The route planned for Coke was through the Eastern Shore, and Black Harry was guide, servant, and assistant preacher. "I have now," he writes, on the 29th of November, "had the pleasure of hearing Harry preach several times. I sometimes give notice, immediately after preaching, that in a little time he will preach

to the blacks; but the whites always stay to hear him. It is romantic to see such numbers of horses fastened to the trees. Being engaged in the most solemn exercises of religion, for three or four hours every day, I hardly know the day of the week; every one appears to me like the Lord's-day. Perhaps I have, in this tour, baptized more children and adults than I should in my whole life if stationed in an English parish."

Coke passed through Queen Anne county—where Thomas Ware, a young preacher, sketches him:

He passed through our circuit. I met him on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. At first I was not pleased with his appearance. His stature, complexion, and voice resembled those of a woman rather than those of a man; and his manners were too courtly for me. So unlike was he to the grave and, as I conceived, apostolic Asbury, that his appearance did not prepossess me favorably. He had several appointments on the circuit, to which I conducted him; and, before we parted, I saw so many things to admire in him that I no longer marveled at his being selected by Wesley to serve us in the capacity of a superintendent. In public he was generally admired, and in private he was very communicative and edifying. At one time, in a large circle, he expressed himself in substance as follows: "I am charmed by the spirit of my American brethren. Their love to Mr. Wesley is not surpassed by that of their brethren in Europe. It is founded on the excellence—the *divinity*—of the religion which he has been the instrument of reviving, and which has shed its benign influence on this land of freedom. I see," he continued, with a countenance glowing with delight, "a great and effectual door opened for the promulgation of Methodism in America, whose institutions I greatly admire, and whose prosperity I no less wish than I do that of the land which gave me birth. In the presence of Mr. Asbury I feel myself a child. He is, in my estimation, the most apostolic man I ever saw, except Mr. Wesley."

Thomas Ware had been admitted on trial in May preceding, and in this connection we may present his impressions of Asbury: "It was the first Conference I attended. There was quite a number of preachers present. Although there were but few on whose heads time had begun to snow, yet several of them appeared to be way-worn and weather-beaten into premature old age. Among these pioneers, Asbury, by common consent, stood first and chief. There was something in his person, his eye, his mien, and in the music of his voice, which interested all who saw and heard him. He possessed much natural wit, and was capable of the severest satire; but grace and good sense so far predominated that he never descended to any thing beneath the dignity of a man and a Christian minister. ¶ In prayer he excelled." Garrettson says, "He prayed the best, and he prayed the most,

of any man I ever knew." Another declared that though a strong preacher, and sometimes impressively eloquent, his prayers nearly always made his sermons a disappointment to strangers. 9

Whatcoat and Vasey had accompanied Asbury from Barratt's Chapel over the Western Shore of Maryland. The 26th of November Asbury observed "as a day of fasting and prayer, that I might," he says, "know the will of God in the matter that is shortly to come before our Conference; the preachers and people seem to be much pleased with the projected plan; I myself am led to think it is of the Lord. I am not tickled with the honor to be gained; I see danger in the way. My soul waits upon God. O that he may lead us in the way we should go!"

About the middle of December they all met at Perry Hall, and Gough's ample hospitalities were well suited to their deliberations. "Here," says Coke, "I have a noble room to myself, where Mr. Asbury and I may, in the course of a week, mature every thing for the Conference." Garrettson had proved a good herald.\* In six weeks he had compassed most of the land, and gathered to Baltimore over sixty out of eighty-three traveling preachers. On Friday, the 24th of December, 1784, the little company at Perry Hall rode to Baltimore, and at ten o'clock A.M. began the first "General Conference," in the Lovely Lane Chapel.

Coke took the chair, and the "Circular Letter" of Wesley was read. In accordance with this document, says Asbury, "it was agreed to form ourselves into an Episcopal Church, and to have superintendents, elders, and deacons." Asbury declined ordination to the superintendency, unless, in addition to the appointment of Wesley, his brethren should formally elect him to that office. He was unanimously elected; and on the second day of the session (25th) he was ordained deacon by Coke, assisted by his presbyters, Vasey and Whatcoat; on Sunday, the third day, they ordained him elder; on Monday he was consecrated superintendent, or bishop—his friend, Otterbein, of the German Church, assisting Coke and his elders in the rite, at Asbury's special request. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were spent in enacting rules of discipline, and in the election of preachers to orders. On Fri-

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\*Jesse Lee, who was not there, says of Garrettson: "But being fond of preaching by the way, and thinking he could do the business by writing, he did not give timely notice to the preachers who were in the extremities of the work; and of course several of them were not at that Conference."



day several deacons were ordained; on Saturday, January 1st, the project of Cokesbury College at Abingdon was considered; on Sunday, the 2d, ten elders (previously ordained deacons) and one deacon were ordained; and then the General Conference—known as the *Christmas Conference*—adjourned.

The elders were John Tunnell, William Gill, Le Roy Cole, Nelson Reed, John Haggerty, Reuben Ellis, Richard Ivey, Henry Willis, James O'Kelly, and Beverly Allen. Tunnell and Willis were "on the extremities of the work," and perhaps were absent on that account. They and Allen were ordained subsequently. John Dickins, Ignatius Pigman, and Caleb Boyer were chosen deacons. Boyer and Pigman were ordained in June following at the Conference in Baltimore. In compliance with the call from Nova Scotia, Garrettson and James O. Cromwell were ordained elders for that province. Jeremiah Lambert was ordained to the same office for Antigua, in the West Indies.

Watters says that Wesley's plan was adopted, "in a regular formal manner, with not one dissenting voice." Black, from Nova Scotia, had come for help; he gazed upon the scene with admiration. "Perhaps," he says, "such a number of holy, zealous, godly men never before met together in Maryland, perhaps not on the continent of America." Their work of ten days has been before us for a century, and speaks for itself. Says a chronicler of the occasion! "The secret of their success was their oneness of spirit. Like the disciples in the chamber at Jerusalem, 'they were all of one heart and of one mind.' Whoever looks at the system of rules or of government devised and sent forth by the General Conference of 1784 must concede to it a 'whole-sidedness,' and unselfishness both as it regards the preachers themselves and the people under their care."

Coke's ordination sermon was published. It did not fall dead from the press. He was called to account in England for some expressions in it—perhaps for these: "You may now perceive the dreadful effects of raising immoral or unconverted men to the government of the Church. The baneful influence of their example is so extensive that the skill and cruelty of devils can hardly fabricate a greater curse than an irreligious bishop. But thou, O man of God, follow after righteousness, godliness, patience, and meekness. Be an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

¶The "Articles of Religion" prepared by Wesley are an abridgment of the "Thirty-nine Articles" of the Church of England, omitting the third, eighth, thirteenth, fifteenth, seventeenth (Calvinistic), eighteenth, twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-third, thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, and thirty-seventh of the latter, also parts of the sixth, ninth, and nineteenth, and introducing verbal emendations of others. These, being for the first time proposed in form, were unanimously adopted. The Conference added an article on Civil Rulers, numbered twenty-three; making in all twenty-five.¶

¶The standards of doctrine received by British Methodism, and in the late "Deed of Declaration" named, were Wesley's four volumes of sermons (comprising from one to fifty-three, in our current series) and "Notes on the New Testament." ¶These had also been received in America, and the preachers in Conference assembled had more than once pledged themselves to "preach the doctrines taught in the four volumes of sermons and the 'Notes on the New Testament.'" They had also resolved, by way of guarding against unsound European preachers who might come over, to hold them to that doctrinal test. The "Articles" are a terse and strong setting forth of Christian dogma, so far as they go; and they could not have been left out of any abridgment of the "Book of Common Prayer," by Wesley, without an improper inference; but there are essential Wesleyan doctrines not mentioned in them, as the witness of the Spirit and Christian perfection.¶ The "Articles of Religion," together with the "established standards" of doctrine, make a system as complete as it is orthodox; and Episcopal Methodism has not only been faithful to these Articles and standards, but has thrown around them the strongest constitutional guards.

+ Under the "General Rules" the membership of Methodism, both in England and America, had been gathered; and this brief and, for its size, very complete system of Christian ethics or morals was ordered to be read "once a year in every congregation, and once a quarter in every Society."

¶No person could be ordained a superintendent, elder, or deacon, without the consent of a majority of the Conference, and the consent and imposition of the hands of a superintendent.¶ The superintendent was made amenable for his conduct to the Conference, "who have power to expel him for improper conduct if they see it necessary." If by death, expulsion, or otherwise,

there be no superintendent remaining in our Church, "the Conference shall elect one, and the elders, or any three of them, shall ordain him according to our liturgy."

The business was transacted under the form of questions and answers: "Question 37: What shall be the regular annual salary of the elders, deacons, and helpers? Answer: Sixty-four dollars and no more; and for each preacher's wife sixty-four dollars; and for each preacher's child, if under the age of six years, there shall be allowed sixteen dollars; and for each child of the age of six and under the age of eleven years twenty-one dollars and thirty-three cents." This rule of allowance for children was canceled in 1787; and no regular provision was made until 1800. ✓

It was enacted: "We will on no account whatsoever suffer any elder or deacon among us to receive a fee or present for administering the ordinance of marriage, baptism, or the burial of the dead; freely we receive, and freely we give." "After a few years," says Jesse Lee, "it was thought best to take a present for performing the marriage ceremony; and for the money so received to be given in to the stewards of the circuit, to be applied to the making up of the preacher's quarterage; but in case the preachers of the circuit received their quarterage without it, then the money so received should be brought to the next Conference, and be applied to the making up of the deficiencies of the preachers. But there was another alteration made in 1800, and each preacher was then allowed to take for marrying people what they chose to give him, and to keep it, without giving any account of it; which custom has prevailed ever since." ✓ Connectionalism, unity, pervaded every thing. ✓ The ministry was yet one family, with common privations and common resources. ✓

The Conference devised a plan of relief for "superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers." It was called the "Preachers' Fund," and was to be provided by the preachers themselves paying, at their admission to the Conference and annually afterward, two dollars. The Chartered Fund, incorporated in 1797, absorbed and superseded this plan. But the "Conference Collection"—the best reliance—an annual contribution by the Church in this behalf, soon came into vogue, and continues to this day.

✓ A strong deliverance on the subject of slavery was made, and specific and peremptory directions for emancipation were laid



down, to which we must recur, in connection with the whole subject, for it made much history.

The administration of the sacraments was provided for, and rules prescribed for uniformity and propriety and profiting in the same. The admission of persons into the Church was regulated, and also the form of public worship, of love-feasts, and class-meetings. Prohibitions were enacted against superfluity and extravagance in apparel, and the marriage of Christians with unawakened persons. Directions were given for singing, and how congregations should be seated—"let the men and women sit apart in all our chapels."

Rules were given for the conduct of preachers: how their time should be occupied and their labors bestowed for the edification of the Church—in preaching, in visiting, in instructing the children, in studying: *saving souls* is the great business.

The men of 1784 were mostly young or middle-aged. Several old heads were there on young shoulders. They were no constitution-mongers. Of course they left undone some things which afterward had to be done; and they did some things which had to be undone. Special legislation, from the beginning, has been prolific of repeals; and Methodists have been warned, from that day to this, not to be wise above what is written.

They adjourned without providing for any subsequent General Conference. "No division of the wide field into Annual Conferences, with boundaries, was made until twelve years later." The Bishops called the itinerant ministers to meet annually where it was most convenient for any considerable number of them. All such sessions, down to the organization of the quadrennial General Conference, were considered as adjourned meetings of the undivided ministry. The enactments of no one session were binding on general questions till they had been virtually adopted at the other sessions of the same ecclesiastical year, and had thus become the expression of a majority of the ministry.

No limitation of the pastoral term was fixed. Preachers had been exchanging circuits annually, semi-annually, and even quarterly. In the "Deed of Declaration," the maximum had been fixed at three years for the British Methodists, and so remains to this day. Wesley was in principle an itinerant. Speaking of certain preachers, he said: "Be their talents ever so great, they will, ere long, grow dead themselves, and so will most

of those that hear them. 'I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep.) Nor can I ever believe it was ever the will of our Lord that any congregation should have one teacher only. We have found, by long and constant experience, that a frequent change of teachers is best. This preacher has one talent, that another. No one, whom I ever knew, has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation."

The work of Church extension began at the Christmas Conference. Asbury took horse the day after adjournment and rode forty miles. Lambert left for Antigua. Garrettson and Cromwell embarked for Nova Scotia, in view of which they had been ordained, about the middle of February; a voyage, at that season, uncomfortable and even dangerous. Methodism had obtained a limited existence among the colonists composing the Eastern British Provinces, about four years before, by the labors of William Black. He had succeeded in raising a few Societies, and came to Baltimore to press the importance of sending missionaries to that promising field. 'Garrettson and Cromwell landed at Halifax, and began their missionary labors—the first missionaries from the United States to "foreign lands;" and the first missionary collection of the Methodist Episcopal Church was taken up the same year by the bishops for the support of these missionaries (£30). They found there John Mann—a convert of Boardman in New York ten years before—who had supplied the John Street Church during the Revolutionary War, while the English held the city. He joined with them, and made a fourth itinerant. They found also some loyal refugees from the States, and formed a Society with which to begin the organization of Methodism in the colony. The missionaries had success. They extended their field to the island of Newfoundland and to New Brunswick. Garrettson labored in these provinces for two years. Wesley, at his instance, sent other missionaries; and, when Garrettson returned to the States, there were in Nova Scotia over seven hundred members. Methodism has long had in Eastern British America thousands of members, with chapels and all the appliances of religious prosperity, and an able corps of preachers.

Bishop Asbury determined to occupy the fields which had been attempted nearly fifty years before by the Oxford Methodists,

and turned his face to South Carolina and Georgia. He left Baltimore, January, 4, 1785, in company with Woolman Hickson, and on the 8th reached Culpepper, Virginia, where Henry Willis had stopped on his way to the Conference. The next day he read prayers, preached, and ordained Willis a deacon—his first act of ordination—and baptized some children. Henry Willis now joined himself to the company, and when they arrived at Carter's Church on the 18th, the Bishop ordained him elder, administered the sacrament, and held the love-feast. The Lord was with them eminently in each of these services. Henry Willis had gone beyond the mountains the last year, and was too far west to be reached by Garrettson when summoning men to the Christmas Conference; but he got word of it and was trying to reach the post of duty, when Asbury met him. Under his guidance they passed into North Carolina, and reached the mansion of Colonel Herndon, on the head-waters of the Pedee, and within the bounds of the Yadkin Circuit. Here they rested for a few days, and made preparation for their journey into South Carolina. Jesso Lee came up from Salisbury to attend the Bishop's appointment at this place, and was requested to travel with him during his trip to the South. "Nothing," says Asbury, "could have better pleased our old Church folks than the late step we have taken in administering the ordinances; to the *Catholic* Presbyterians it also gives satisfaction; but the Baptists are discontented."

The company, now fully formed, entered upon their journey, daily in every house ceasing not to teach and preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. They entered South Carolina at Cheraw, and were welcomed to the hospitalities of a merchant who had been a Methodist in Virginia, and in whose employment there was a clerk, a native of Massachusetts. This young man gave Lee an account of the customs and religious life of New England, and kindled in him a desire, that ripened into a purpose, to visit that part of the country on a mission. They arrived at Georgetown, and Bishop Asbury preached at night to a serious congregation. Just as they were about to start for the place of worship, the gentleman at whose house they were stopping excused himself, "as it was his turn to superintend a ball that night." They prayed that if the Lord had called them to Georgetown, he would open the heart and house of some other person to receive them. At the close of the service Mr. Wayne, a cousin of Gen-



eral Anthony Wayne, invited them to call on him, and from that time his house became a home for Methodist preachers. They breakfasted with him, and on leaving he showed them the way to the river, and paid their ferriage.

According to custom, Willis went ahead of the party to put out appointments for preaching; and their host was thoughtful and kind enough to furnish him with a letter of introduction to a friend in Charleston. Asbury's journal says:

February 24.—We traveled on through a barren country, in all respects, to Charleston. We came that evening to Scott's, where the people seemed to be merry; they soon became mute. We talked and prayed with them. In the morning, when we took our leave of them, they would receive nothing. We met Brother Willis. He had gone along before us, and had made an acquaintance with Mr. Wells, a respectable merchant of the city, to whom he had carried letters of introduction from Mr. Wayne. I jogged on, dejected in spirit, and came to Mr. Wells's. We obtained the use of an old meeting-house belonging to the General Baptists, in which they had ceased to preach. Brother Willis preached at noon, Brother Lee morning and evening.

'Charleston was almost as hard a place to gain a footing in as Paul and Silas found Philippi to be.' "The inhabitants are vain and wicked to a proverb," is Asbury's observation. His first sermon was on March 2d; he "had but little enlargement." Next day the people were more solemn and attentive. "I find," he says, "there are here who oppose us—I leave the Lord to look to his own cause. I told my hearers that I expected to stay in the city but seven days; that I should preach every night, if they would favor me with their company, and that I should speak on subjects of primary importance to their souls, and explain the essential doctrines taught and held by the Methodists." Then followed "a discourse on the nature of conviction for sin," and some appeared to feel. After a sermon on the nature and necessity of repentance, he adds: "Ministers who had represented our principles in an unfavorable light, and strove to prepossess the people's minds against our doctrines—even these ministers came to hear. This afternoon Mr. Wells began to feel conviction; my soul praised the Lord for this fruit of our labors, this answer to our prayers." Fruit begins to appear. Of Wednesday, the 8th of March, he writes: "I had a good time on Matthew vii. 7. In the evening the clouds about Mr. Wells began to disperse; in the morning he could rejoice in the Lord. How great is the work of God!—once a sinner, yesterday a seeker, and now his

adopted child! Now we know that God hath brought us here, and have a hope that there will be a glorious work among the people—at least among the Africans.” The day following he preached his last sermon, and leaves with these reflections: “I loved and pitied the people, and left some under gracious impressions. We took our leave; and had the satisfaction of observing that Mrs. Wells appeared to be very sensibly affected.”

On their return through Georgetown he “found Mrs. Wayne under deep distress of soul.” So the work, as of old, begins and spreads. Henry Willis was left in Charleston, its first stationed preacher, and by his labors the church was organized which continues to this day.

Lee returned to his circuit and the Bishop passed on to meet the first Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, held at Green Hill’s in North Carolina, April 20, 1785. Willis at Charleston and Hickson at Georgetown made those points the centers of their movements. They traveled up the principal rivers—Pedee, Santee, Wateree, and Broad—and wherever settlements could be reached they established preaching-places. The next year, about the same time, Bishop Asbury made his second visit to South Carolina, and saw that seed had fallen upon good ground. Henry Willis came as far as Georgetown to meet him, and as they rode to Charleston, Asbury records: “It was no small comfort to me to see a very good frame prepared for the erection of a meeting-house for us, on that very road along which, last year, we had gone pensive and distressed, without a friend to entertain us.” The services on Sunday (Jan. 15) in Charleston were hopeful: “We had a solemn time in the day, and a full house and good time in the evening. My heart was much taken up with God. Our congregations are large, and our people are encouraged to undertake the building of a meeting-house this year.”

The Conference at Green Hill’s included all of Virginia, and of North and South Carolina, who could be present, and they were entertained in one house. Here Asbury was joined by Coke, who says: “There were about twenty preachers, or more, in one house, and by laying beds on the floors there was room for all. We spent three days, from Wednesday to Friday inclusive, in Conference, and a comfortable time we had together. In this division we had an increase of nine hundred and ninety-one this year,

and have stretched our borders into Georgia. Beverly Allen has all Georgia to range in."

Beverly Allen was now ordained elder, and began to "range." He turned out to be one of those popular preachers who find work everywhere else but where they are appointed; who promise much and come to nothing: he came to worse than nothing. The bad eminence of being the first apostate Methodist presbyter is his. He managed to get up a personal correspondence with Wesley, by which he derived more consideration than he was entitled to; married rich; fell into sin; was expelled; went into business; failed; killed the marshal who was arresting him; fled to a part of Kentucky in Logan county then called "Rogues' Harbor;" became a Universalist, and went out in obscure darkness: all this within the next dozen years. Nevertheless, faithful though less popular men were found to plant Methodism in Georgia, and heroically they did it.

Next year John Major and Thomas Humphries were appointed to that State. Presiding elders and their districts were not yet so named and laid off; but an elder, to preach and administer the sacraments, was assigned to a given region. South Carolina and Georgia were under James Foster as elder this year (1786). He had traveled in Virginia for two years, but excessive fasting and labor in the open air had enfeebled his constitution, and he was forced to locate. He removed to South Carolina, where he found some emigrant Methodists, and formed a circuit among them. He reëntered the Conference, and this was his first work. It was too great for him. His mental as well as his bodily strength gave way, and he retired after one year. He spent the rest of his life in visiting among Methodist families, conducting their family devotions with much propriety, though unable to preach to them. He was noted for his amenity, his fine personal appearance, and his usefulness.

Thomas Humphries, like Foster, was a Virginian, and had traveled three years in his native State and in North Carolina. After laboring a few years in Georgia, he moved to South Carolina, located within the bounds of Pedee Circuit, and was a useful local preacher for the rest of his days. John Major, his countryman and colleague, was called the weeping prophet. He did hard work for ten years, and ceased at once to work and live.

There were at that date in Georgia, as far as we can get the



facts, three Episcopal churches without rectors, three Lutheran churches, three Presbyterian, and three Baptist. We may safely say there were not five hundred Christian people in all. The inhabitants numbered eighty thousand, white and black. The social features of the country were those of all frontier settlements. The field was indeed a wide one, a hard one, and yet an inviting one. The two Georgia missionaries started from Conference for their work. They probably came at once to Wilkes county, where a few Virginia Methodists had settled, and then began to explore and map out the country. They found the people everywhere destitute of the Word. Save one or two Baptist churches organized by Marshall and Mercer, there was no church of any name north of Augusta. The western boundary of the State was the Oconee River; the southern, Florida; in all this area there were not more than seven Christian ministers. The settlements were upon the creeks and rivers, and the inhabitants were thinly settled all over the face of the land. The dwellings were pole-cabins in the country, and even the villages were built largely of logs. There were no houses of worship, and the missionaries preached only in private dwellings. The work had all to be laid out, and for the first year it is probable the two preachers visited together the settlements which were thickest, and organized Societies wherever they could. From the Minutes we conclude that they compassed the country from the Indian frontier on the north to the lower part of Burke county on the south. During the year four hundred and thirty members were brought into the Society, the larger number in Wilkes county.\*

One specimen of the mode and the measure of their operations may serve. Henry Parks, a strong and brave young man from North Carolina, with his young family settled in Elbert county, where he was employed to oversee a plantation. His wife, Elizabeth Justice, had been baptized by Jarratt, and joined the Methodists; but her husband was a stranger alike to grace and to them. One day the news came that two Methodist preachers would hold a meeting in the neighborhood. She persuaded her husband to go and hear them, and for the first time he heard, from Major, the doctrine of a universal atonement.† He determined to be saved, if he could be; was soon converted and joined the Methodist

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\*Smith's History of Methodism in Georgia. †Ibid.

Church; made his house a preaching-place; and afterward, with the help of his neighbors, built a meeting-house. God prospered him as far as he wished to be prospered in worldly matters, and blessed him with a large family. Of these William J. Parks was the youngest son, without mentioning whom the history of Georgia preachers and Methodism could hardly be written. The venerable patriarch lived until 1845. His descendants are among the leading Methodists of that State, and are very numerous.

Major and Humphries had done good work during the year, and at the next Conference they were reënforced by two young men. Georgia was made a separate district, and Richard Ivey was sent as elder. Circuits were now laid out. The Burke Circuit, including all that section south and south-west of Augusta, was placed in charge of Major, with Matthew Harris to assist him. Thomas Humphries and Moses Park took charge of all the country north and north-west of Augusta. Of Ivey, the Minutes say: "He was from Virginia, a little man of quick and solid parts. He was a holy, self-denying Christian that lived to be useful. Many of the eighteen years that he was in the work he acted as an elder in charge of a district." He had acquired valuable experience before he came to Georgia, where, after four years' service, his health failed, and the needs of an invalid mother called him back home. A year after his location, he passed to his final reward. The preachers pursued their labors with great zeal, and at the end of 1787 there were over one thousand one hundred members. The Church had tripled its membership in one year. This success was not to be wondered at. Ivey, Major, and Humphries were no common men, and the pioneers of Georgia heard for the first time the doctrines of a universal atonement and the Spirit's witness.)

It is supposed that during this year Humphries must have preached in Augusta, and perhaps in Savannah, but all that was accomplished was confined to the rural settlements. The Washington Circuit, much the largest, included all that section of North-eastern and Eastern Georgia above Augusta. Georgia was long the Southern frontier. It has been propitious for Methodism. The leaven is in the lump, the seed is in the soil, and we must now leave it for awhile.

South Carolina had been reënforced from the Conference held at Salisbury, February, 1786. Henry Willis returned to

Charleston with Isaac Smith as his colleague. The last name introduces us to a new man, who is hereafter to spend and be spent on the Southern frontier. Isaac Smith, a native of Virginia, served as private and officer in the Revolutionary War; was present at the battles of Princeton, Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, and Stony Point, and bore the honorable scars of the conflict to his grave. He had been a colleague of Lee, and also of Humphries in North Carolina, and is to fill prominent appointments in South Carolina till 1796; then he locates and engages in mercantile pursuits in Camden. Reëntering the itinerancy again, we shall meet with him where difficult posts are to be occupied. When he died in 1834, after more than half a century of ministerial labor, the Minutes record: "He was one of the fathers of the Church in this country, and entitled to be had in everlasting remembrance. We cannot trust ourselves to speak fully of him. He was the oldest, and, what was well becoming the father of the Conference, the most honored and beloved of all the preachers. Believing every word of God, meek above the reach of provocation, and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of love and devotion, he was a saint indeed."

His name is entered in the appointment at Charleston, but this year he formed the famous Edisto Circuit, reaching from Savannah River to within thirty miles of Charleston, and from Coosawhatchie Swamp to Santee, returning to the ensuing Conference two hundred and forty white members and four colored. (It was during this year (1786), while forming the Edisto Circuit, that, riding upon the banks of the Santee, he felt the need of a deeper consecration to God; and dismounting from his horse, in a grove beside the river, he had a season of wrestling prayer, and from that time the assurance of God's love never forsook him for an hour.) He would often come from his closet, after remaining an hour upon his knees, with his face glowing with a heavenly light. Says the historian of that time:

In this region (Edisto) the name Methodist was scarcely known till he visited it. The new name and his heart-searching preaching caused much stir among the people, as they had heard but little preaching before, and knew nothing of experimental religion. Many were convicted and converted, and a number of Societies, were formed. (It was no uncommon event for persons to fall under his pungent preaching as suddenly as if they had been shot.) The doctrine of the new birth was no better understood by the people then than it was by Nicodemus, until they were enlightened by his preaching. (The pioneer of Methodism not only has to take



people as he finds them, but the gold has to be worked out of the ore. When Mr. Smith was forming Edisto Circuit, a gentleman who was not a professor of religion invited him to his home. While at his house his host observed that he frequently retired into the woods, and on one occasion followed him, when, to his great astonishment, he found him on his knees engaged in prayer. This struck him under conviction, and was the cause of his embracing religion soon after. The happy mixture of dignity, pleasantness, and meekness in his countenance was calculated to win the good opinion of such as beheld him. His appearance and his manners qualified him for the missionary work, and many of those whom he found dead in sin, and their tongues defiled with profane language, he soon rejoiced to hear praising God. He, like most of his brethren that were engaged in planting Methodism, did not weary his congregations with dry and tedious discourses, but their sermons were short and energetic. They enforced their preaching with the most consistent deportment in the families where they sojourned, always praying with them and for them, and speaking to each individual on the great matter of salvation.

Charleston, at last, began to show signs that Methodism had driven down its stake and intended to hold on. The plain wooden structure on Cumberland street, sixty by forty feet, with galleries for the colored people, approached completion; and the "Blue Meeting" house was ready for the next Conference, the first held in the State. It cost about five thousand dollars, exclusive of the one thousand five hundred dollar lot on which it stood; and the preachers reported thirty-three white members and fifty-three colored at the close of the year.

On the 12th of March, 1787, Bishop Asbury crossed the Little Pedee, and, attended by Hope Hull, came to Georgetown, receiving information on the route that Bishop Coke was in Charleston. He had arrived there from the West Indies, in February; had dedicated the new church, and was preaching daily. Such was the spirit of hearing excited among the inhabitants that from three to four hundred persons regularly attended the morning preaching. Asbury says: "We rode nearly fifty miles to get to Georgetown. Here the scene was greatly changed—almost the whole town came together to hear the word of the Lord. We arrived in Charleston and met Dr. Coke. Here we have already a spacious house prepared for us, and the congregations are crowded and solemn." Conference opened March 22d, and closed the 29th. For many successive years the Conference met in Charleston, until other places in the State became strong enough to contest this honor with it.

Two names appear this year on the Pedee Circuit that are

memorable—Hope Hull and Jeremiah Mastin. The latter was a young man in the second year of his ministry. After traveling the Pedee Circuit one year, he gave three years in succession to the Holston country, and located in 1790. Hope Hull was a native of Maryland, a classmate in the ministry of Mastin. Their popularity was very great, only equaled by their efficiency. When they left the Pedee country, Methodism was established there. The number of members in this historic circuit was this year increased to seven hundred and ninety whites and thirty-three colored. They also reported twenty-two churches, the most of which had been built during their term of service.

Hope Hull, after spending a year in South Carolina, transferred to Georgia, where he identified himself with the Church, and was felt in the moral and intellectual development of the State. With the exception of the year 1792, when he went to assist Jesse Lee in New England, and traveled the Hartford Circuit in Connecticut, Hope Hull gave the remainder of his ministerial life to Georgia. He located in 1795; established an academy in Wilkes county; removed to Athens in 1802; was one of the founders of the Georgia University, and at one time its acting president. He died in 1818. One of his ablest contemporaries thus describes him:

Mr. Hull was a fine specimen of what may be regarded an old-fashioned American Methodist preacher. His oratory was natural, his action being the unaffected expression of his inmost mind. Not only was there an entire freedom from every thing like mannerism, but there was a great harmony between his gesticulation and the expression of his countenance. He seemed, in some of his finest moods of thought, to *look* his words into his audience. He was one of nature's orators, who never spoiled his speaking by scholastic restraints. He wisely cultivated his mind and taste that he might rightly conceive and speak; but he left all external oratory to find its inspiration in his subject, and to warm itself into life in the glow of his mind. Hence, in many of his masterly efforts, his words rushed upon his audience like an avalanche, and multitudes seemed to be carried before him like the yielding captives of a stormed castle. Christians, entangled in the meshes of Satan's net, and ready to abandon their hope of the Divine mercy, have been cleared of these entanglements under his judicious tracings of the Holy Spirit in his manifold operations on the heart and conscience. Powerful emotion could be seen as it played in unmistakable outline upon the anxious believer's countenance, while undergoing one of these spiritual siftings; and when, at last the verdict was written on his heart that he was a child of God according to the rules of evidence laid down, all the conventional rules about the propriety of praise were broken by one welling wave of joy.\*

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\* Dr. Lovick Pierce, in Sprague's Annals.

It is the year of grace 1788, and of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America the fourth. Eight Annual Conferences are to be held this epochal year—five of them for the first time. In order to realize the progress made, let us take the first grand round with the General Superintendent. Conferences have heretofore been confined to the old settlements on the Atlantic coast; but in various directions, north, south, west, and north-west, itinerants have gone forth, reconnoitered the frontiers, selected the strategic points under their leader's eye, and been reënforced by him according to the openings of Providence. It is time to develop and complete the system of occupation that has been forming on the outskirts. Those vital centers of influence and government—Conferences—must now be organized, so that what has been gained may be held, and aggressive movements may begin upon the regions beyond. We will start at Charleston, which has just entertained its second Conference, and keeping company with Bishop Asbury, return to the place of setting out. Leaving Charleston, March 17, the Bishop says: "Upon the whole, I have had more liberty to speak in Charleston this visit than I ever had before, and am of opinion that God will work here; but our friends are afraid of the cross." Thirty-six times did he visit that city after this date.

The Georgia Conference was to be held in the forks of Broad River, then in Wilkes, now Elbert, county—probably at the home of David Merriwether, who lived there, and who had recently joined the Church. In company with Isaac Smith, the Bishop made his way up the Saluda to the Broad River quarterly-meeting. To reach it, he says: "We rode till one o'clock on Friday the 21st of March; I believe we have traveled about two hundred miles in five days; dear Brother Smith accompanied me. I was so unwell that I had but little satisfaction at the quarterly-meeting; my service was burdensome; but the people were lively." Here he met Mason; and here too was John Major, who had come to meet him. Consumption was wearing this saintly man into his grave; but he was well enough to exhort after Asbury had preached. His journal says: "April 1.—We crossed the Savannah at the Forks, and came where I much wanted to be, in Georgia. April 2.—I rested; and compiled two sections, which I shall recommend to be put into our form of discipline in order to re-



move from Society, by regular steps, either preachers or people that are disorderly." There were ten present—six members of the Conference and four probationers. The good Major was not able to meet with his brethren; on his way to Conference he sunk, and near the time it ended its session he went to rest.

Richard Ivey, Thomas Humphries, Moses Park, Hope Hull, James Conner, Bennett Maxey, Isaac Smith, Matthew Harris, and Reuben Ellis, and probably John Mason from the adjoining Circuit in South Carolina, constituted the Conference. Of these, six only were to remain in Georgia. Three or four of them were quite young; the rest, unmarried men of mature years. They received their appointments, and the Bishop left them for Holston Conference. A noble picket guard, they were, to hold the Southern frontier. No mean addition to their number was Hope Hull. He was appointed to the Washington Circuit. (He was called the "Broad-ax," because of the power of his ministry.) If not the father of Georgia Methodism, he was second to no other in fostering it.\*

Emigrants from Virginia and North Carolina had moved beyond the Alleghanies, and settled in the valleys of the Holston and Nollichucky and French Broad rivers; they had also ventured into Kentucky and Middle Tennessee. The Indian dwelt in the land. The pioneers were compelled to dwell for safety in strongly defended forts, or "stations." Among the emigrants, there was occasionally a local preacher, hardy, godly, and gifted, to preach to such a community, and to form small Societies in various localities.

As early as 1784, the itinerants crossed the mountains. Two years later, James Haw and Benjamin Ogden were commissioned for the wide circuit of "Kentucky." In 1787, Bishop Coke, referring to a letter received from Haw, says: "One of our elders who last year was sent with a preacher to Kentucky, on the banks of the Ohio, wrote me a most enlivening account of his district, and earnestly implored some further assistance. 'But observe,' added he, 'no man must be appointed to this country that is afraid to die. For there is now war with the Indians, who frequently lurk behind the trees, shoot the travelers, and then scalp them; and we have one Society on the very frontiers of the Indian country.'"

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\*Smith's History of Methodism in Georgia.

Recrossing the Savannah River, and pursuing his route through upper South Carolina, Bishop Asbury held his course north-westward. First and last he crossed the Alleghanies sixty times. The perils of the mountains were succeeded by the danger of high waters. He seldom went through the country without being thoroughly soaked with rain, or having to swim some river or creek. Most commonly his rides were from early breakfast, without intermission, until evening—sometimes nine and ten o'clock at night. We give a few items from his journal:

North Carolina, April 22.—We went on, and reached Brother White's, on Johns River, about ten o'clock at night; here I found both the saddles broke, both horses foundered, and both their backs sore—so we stopped a few days.

April 28.—After getting our horses shod, we made a move for Holstein, and entered upon the mountains; the first of which I called steel, the second stone, and the third iron mountain; they are rough, and difficult to climb. We were spoken to on our way by the most awful thunder and lightning, accompanied by heavy rain. We crept for shelter into a little dirty house where the filth might have been taken from the floor with a spade; we felt the want of fire, but could get little wood to make it, and what we gathered was wet. At the head of Watawga we fed, and reached Ward's that night. Coming to the river next day, we hired a young man to swim over for the canoe, in which we crossed, while our horses swam to the other shore. The waters being up, we were compelled to travel an old road over the mountains. Night came on—I was ready to faint with a violent headache—the mountain was steep on both sides. I prayed to the Lord for help; presently a profuse sweat broke out upon me, and my fever entirely subsided. About nine o'clock we came to Grear's. After taking a little rest here, we set out next morning for Brother Cox's on Holstein River. I had trouble enough; our route lay through the woods, and my pack-horse would neither follow, lead, nor drive, so fond was he of stopping to feed on the green herbage. I tried the lead, and he pulled back. I tied his head up to prevent his grazing, and he ran back; the weather was excessively warm. I was much fatigued, and my temper not a little tried. I fed at Smith's, and prayed with the family. Arriving at the river, I was at a loss what to do; but providentially, a man came along who conducted me across. This has been an awful journey to me.

In due time he came to Keywoods, near Saltville, in southwestern Virginia, about twenty miles from Abingdon. "Here," says the Bishop, "we held Conference three days, and I preached each day. The weather was cold; the room without fire and otherwise uncomfortable." Here that noble leader, John Tunnell, mustered in his picket forces, among whom are Jeremiah Mastin—lately a companion of Hope Hull on the Pedee—and Thomas Ware, last seen on the Eastern Shore. Ogden and Haw and Wilson Lee, from more distant Kentucky, doubtless came through

the wilderness to attend this first ultramontane Conference. The day after adjournment Asbury briefly rested at General Russell's, "a most kind family in deed and in truth," and the line of travel was resumed (May 15) for Petersburg, where the Virginia and North Carolina preachers meet the middle of June. The list of quarterly-meetings along the devious way shows that the Church is pretty well established. The journal for May 23d says: "A damp, rainy day, and I was unwell with a slow fever and pain in my head; however, I rode to Smith's Chapel and preached; and thence to Brother Harrison's, on Dan River, and preached. In the space of one week we have ridden, through rough, mountainous tracts of country, about three hundred miles. Brother Poythress, Tunnell, and myself have had some serious views of things, and mature counsels together." We may imagine ourselves in that company. The "mature counsels" doubtless took in the transfer of Poythress from North Carolina—where he had joined them after grand success as elder—to Kentucky, soon to be admitted into the Union as a State. Poythress was to lead there, and advance upon the opening north-western territory. The college (Bethel), for which the Kentuckians had petitioned, entered into the plans. He observes of the Conference at Petersburg, June 13: "The towns-folk were remarkably kind and attentive. All things were brought on in love. I preached a pastoral sermon under a large arbor near the borders of the town with considerable consolation."

On the last day of June, the Bishop "came to Greenbrier," heading for Uniontown, Pennsylvania, where Whatcoat and Phœbus, Matson and their fellow-laborers, had made things ready for the first Conference of the Redstone region:

July 10.—We had to cross the Alleghany Mountain again, at a bad passage. Our course lay over mountains and through valleys, and the mud and mire were such as might scarcely be expected in December. We came to an old, forsaken habitation in Tygers Valley; here our horses grazed about, while we boiled our meat; midnight brought us up at Jones's, after riding forty or perhaps fifty miles. The old man, our host, was kind enough to wake us up at four o'clock in the morning. We journeyed on through devious lonely wilds, where no food might be found, except what grew in the woods, or was carried with us. We met with two women who were going to see their friends, and to attend the quarterly-meeting at Clarksburg. Near midnight we stopped at A.'s, who hissed his dogs at us; but the women were determined to get to quarterly-meeting, so we went in. Our supper was tea. Brothers Phœbus and Cook took to the woods; old — gave up his bed to the women. I lay along the floor on a few deer-skins with the fleas. That



night our poor horses got no corn, and next morning they had to swim across the Monongahela; after a twenty miles' ride we came to Clarksburg, and man and beast were so outdone that it took us ten hours to accomplish it. There attended about seven hundred people, to whom I preached with freedom; and I believe the Lord's power reached the hearts of some. After administering the sacrament, I was well satisfied to take my leave. We rode thirty miles to Father Haymond's, after three o'clock, Sunday afternoon, and made it nearly eleven before we came in; about midnight we went to rest, and rose at five o'clock next morning. My mind has been severely tried under the great fatigue endured both by myself and my horse. O how glad should I be of a plain, clean plank to lie on, as preferable to most of the beds; and where the beds are in a bad state, the floors are worse. The gnats are almost as troublesome here as the mosquitoes in the lowlands of the seaboard. This country will require much work to make it tolerable. The people are, many of them, of the boldest class of adventurers, and with some the decencies of civilized society are scarcely regarded. The preaching of Antinomians poisons them with error in doctrine. Good moralists they are not, and good Christians they cannot be, unless they are better taught.

“The Bishop comforted himself with the reflection that we “must take the people as we find them, and make them better;” and that other axiom of his, “Those who *serve* the poor must also *suffer* with them.”)

His journal is very brief. As has been well remarked, he was too busy making history to write it: “July 22.—Our Conference began at Uniontown, and our counsels were marked by love and prudence. We had seven members of Conference, and five probationers.” The Conference occupied three days. The first ultramontane ordination, so far as history is written, occurred here. James Quinn, then a young preacher, destined to wide and permanent usefulness, witnessed the session, and thus alludes to it:

Mr. Asbury officiated, not in the costume of the lawn-robed prelate, but as the plain presbyter in gown and band, assisted by Richard Whatcoat, elder, in the same clerical habit. The person ordained was Michael Leard, of whom it was said that he could repeat nearly the whole of the New Testament from memory, and also large portions of the Old. The scenes of that day looked well in the eyes of the Church people, for not only did the preachers appear in sacerdotal robes, but the morning service was read as abridged by Mr. Wesley. The priestly robes and prayer-book were, however, soon laid aside at the same time, for I have never seen the one nor heard the other since.

Accompanied by Whatcoat, Bishop Asbury recrossed the mountains and recruited at Capon and Bath, preaching two Sundays at the latter watering-place: “August 17.—I attempted to preach at Bath on the lame and the blind; the discourse was very *lame*; and it may be I left my hearers as I found them—*blind*. I am now

closely engaged in reading, writing, and prayer—my soul enjoys much of God. We have great rains, and are obliged to keep close house; but we have a little of almost every thing to improve the mind—the languages, divinity, grammar, history, and *belles-lettres*; my great desire is to improve in the best things.”

He takes a turn at Hebrew and New Testament Greek, as well as at Mosheim and practical divinity, and then resumes the road, by the way of endless quarterly-meetings, for Baltimore, where Conference meets in September: “Thursday, 4.—I preached at Leesburg, and was very warm on ‘Thou wilt arise and favor Zion;’ and the people appeared to be somewhat stirred up. To-day I received a letter from Brother Tunnell, informing of the spreading of the work of God in the West New River, and several parts of North Carolina. Glory be to God, for his great and glorious power! Wednesday, 10.—Our Conference began in Baltimore. I chose not to preach while my mind was clogged by business with so many persons, and on so many subjects. Sunday, 14.—I felt considerably moved at our own church in the morning, and in the Dutch church in the afternoon; the Spirit of the Lord came among the people, and sinners cried aloud for mercy; perhaps not less than twenty souls found the Lord from that time until the Tuesday following.”

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were spent at Cokesbury in examining and arranging the temporal concerns of the college. He is now in the land of roads and ferries, and it is easy going. The next Sundays have their record in the journal: “September 21.—I preached with some satisfaction, morning and evening, in Philadelphia. On Monday our Conference began, and held until Friday, 26.” Since Thomas Rankin held a “little Conference” there, Philadelphia had not seen one till now. “Sunday, 28.—Preached with some assistance in Elizabethtown. Monday, 29.—Rode to New York. Next day (Tuesday, 30) our Conference began, and continued until Saturday.” This was the first Conference in New York; so slowly did Methodism extend in that part of the United States. North and east of New Rochelle it had barely been heard of. It was time to move in that direction. Henry Willis, so well known in South Carolina, was made elder of New York and Long Island. Freeborn Garrettson was transferred from Maryland, and directed by Bishop Asbury, at this session, to take charge of nine young itinerants, and place

them on circuits, from New York City to Lake Champlain. It was a grand campaign, and he was the right man to lead it. But its greatness gave him much anxiety. He was unacquainted with the country, and an entire stranger to its inhabitants. It affected his dreams. He says: "It seemed as if the whole country up the North River, as far as Lake Champlain, east and west, was open to my view." He gave his young men instructions where to begin, and how to form their circuits. He would go before them to the extreme parts of the field, and, on his return, hold their quarterly-meetings. This was the way Methodist ministers in those days exhibited their prowess and confidence in success. Six circuits were formed from New Rochelle to Lake Champlain; and Garrettson led the way up Hudson River. "On his return he found that his itinerants were almost everywhere prevailing over opposition, and forming Societies."

☛ The entertainment of an Annual Conference was a great event for old John Street Church. That Society was at some expense, as the steward's account book shows, to prepare for the occasion. "Green baize" and "red marine" draperies were obtained for the chapel. About fifty dollars were expended for it. "The church was cleaned for the occasion. There were sundry expenses at the time of the Conference, and they footed the bills," besides taking care of the Bishop's two horses, and presenting him with a new bridle.

After setting things in order at this northern outpost, Asbury turned and preached his way back through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. His journal, full of observations and events, has this entry on February 13, 1789: "Rode forty-five miles to Wappataw; and next day arrived in Charleston in sweet peace of soul." A week later: "I was closely employed in making my plan, and arranging the papers for Conference. I made out a register of all the preachers on the continent who bore the name of Methodists." The summing up of the year gives: Preachers one hundred and sixty-six, white members thirty thousand eight hundred and nine, colored members six thousand five hundred and forty-five. Among the dead of this year, besides John Major, is Woolman Hickson, who accompanied Asbury on his first coming to South Carolina. He did faithful work in Georgetown; was transferred to Brooklyn, and had the honor of founding Methodism in that city.



Asbury's journal makes frequent and affectionate mention of Rembert Hall. There was need of such a place for him. One of his successors, Bishop Wightman, who, as a circuit preacher there, knew the place and people well, thus describes it: "The proprietor of this estate, James Rembert, Esq., was a Methodist gentleman, in Sumter District, of large property, who was strongly attached to Asbury. There was a room in his mansion that was appropriated to the Bishop's use. Here he commonly spent a week during his annual visitation to South Carolina. It was a sweet haven, where the weather-beaten sailor found quiet waters, and bright skies, and a season of repose. Here he brought up his journal, wrote his letters, and lectured of an evening to the family and visitors and crowds of servants. Mrs. Rembert was a lady of the kindest heart; she not only had the Bishop's apartment always ready and commodiously furnished, but every year her seamstress made up for him a full supply of linen, which, neatly ironed, awaited the arrival of the Bishop. Rembert Hall, in my time on the Sumter Circuit (1831), was occupied by Caleb Rembert, Esq., his honored father and mother having long before gone to heaven."

[The Histories of Jesse Lee and of Bangs; Biographical Sketches; Stevens's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church; Smith's History of Methodism in Georgia; and Asbury's Journal, furnish the materials for this Chapter.]

## CHAPTER XXVII.

The Sunday Service—Cokesbury College—Slavery and Emancipation—A New Term of Communion Proposed—How Received—West India Missions—Inconsistent and Hurtful Legislation—What Methodism has Done for the Negro.

**A**<sup>1784</sup>FTER the Christmas Conference, the itinerants dispersed to resume their labors with a confidence and hopefulness such as they had never known before. Equipped for their work, they saw "the whole opening continent, illuminated with the gladness of a new era of freedom and prosperity, before them." Bishop Coke proceeded to Philadelphia and New York, to superintend the publication of his ordination-sermon and of the Minutes of the Conference. Though no journal of its doings, in the usual form, was published, its enactments were embodied in a little volume styled a "Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, and other Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America."

'The "Sunday Service" prepared and printed by Wesley was used, but not uniformly.' Jesse Lee who, in Cromwell's time would have been a Puritan, says: "At this time the prayer-book, as revised by Mr. Wesley, was introduced among us; and in the large towns, and in some country-places, our preachers read prayers on the Lord's-day; and in some cases the preachers read part of the morning service on Wednesdays and Fridays. But some of the preachers, who had been long accustomed to pray extempore, were unwilling to adopt this new plan. 'Being fully satisfied that they could pray better and with more devotion while their eyes were shut than they could with their eyes open.' After a few years the prayer-book was laid aside, and has never been used since in public worship." \*

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\*The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1866 (New Orleans), ordered the Sunday Service reprinted "for any congregation that may choose to use it." The reprint was made at the Publishing House (Nashville, 1867; 12mo, 125 pages), under the editorship of Rev. T. O. Summers, D.D., with great care, from the second edition that was printed on Wesley's press in 1786. It has not had a large demand. The General Conference of 1784, in the language of Whatcoat, "agreed to form a Methodist Episcopal Church, in which the Liturgy (as presented by the Rev. John Wesley) should be read."

The merits of this abridgment have been generally acknowledged. According to one of the best judges, "it includes the very quintessence of the English Liturgy in the best possible form." Wesley says in his preface that the principal alterations of the Common Prayer of the Church of England, are these:

"1. Most of the holy days (so called) are omitted, as at present answering no valuable end.

"2. The service of the Lord's-day, the length of which has been complained of, is considerably shortened.

"3. Some sentences in the office of baptism and for the burial of the dead are omitted.

"4. And many Psalms left out, and many parts of the others, as being highly improper for the mouths of a Christian congregation."

Concerning another usage our Virginia historian, of puritanic leanings, testifies that it was of limited and brief observance among Methodists:—"The superintendents and some of the elders introduced the custom of wearing gowns and bands, but it was opposed by many of the preachers, as well as private members, who looked upon it as needless and superfluous. Having made a stand against it, after a few years it was given up, and has never been introduced among us since."

Coke spent five months in the United States, after the Church was organized, laboring incessantly. At the site he "gave orders that the materials for the erection of the college should be procured forthwith;" but he left for Europe before preparations were completed to lay the corner-stone. On Sunday, 5th of June, 1785, Asbury laid, with solemn forms, the corner-stone of Cokesbury College, at Abingdon, Maryland. So early as 1780, John Dickins arranged with him, as has already been recorded, the plan of a Methodist academic institution. At his first interview with Coke, at Barratt's Chapel, Asbury submitted the proposition and it was approved. The Christmas Conference directed that it should be immediately attempted as a collegiate establishment. Nearly five thousand dollars was quickly raised for the purpose. The site, about twenty-five miles from Baltimore, was one of the most commanding in the State; magnificent views extend in some directions twenty, in others fifty miles. The landscapes of the Susquehanna Valley lie on either side of the river, and the Chesapeake Bay stretches away in the distance.



"Attired in his long silk gown," says his biographer, "and with his flowing bands, the pioneer Bishop of America took his position on the walls of the college, and announced for his text the following: 'The sayings of old which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.'"

John Dickins published a description of the building in 1789: "The college is one hundred and eight feet in length from east to west, and forty feet in breadth from north to south, and stands on the summit and center of six acres of land, with an equal descent and proportion of ground on each side." At this time it had thirty students within its unfinished walls. A preparatory school of fifteen students had been opened under its roof by a Quaker, an excellent teacher. Abingdon became a favorite resort for families desiring the advantages of a good school. It accommodated the Conference in 1786; it has happened, indeed, that the Baltimore Conference, beginning its session in the city, adjourned to Cokesbury College for the conclusion of its deliberations; and this, more than once.

Asbury solicited funds to build and furnish and carry on this new Kingswood. The Conference collections for it were respectable, year after year. Great was the burden and care; and now and then results seemed ready to repay them. Stating the object and expectations of the institution, it was said: "It will be expected that all our friends who send their children to the college will, if they be able, pay a moderate sum for their education and board; the rest will be taught and boarded, and, if our finances will allow of it, clothed gratis. The institution is also intended for the benefit of our young men who are called to preach, that they may receive a measure of that improvement which is highly expedient as a preparative for public service. The college will be under the presidentship of the superintendents of our Church for the time being, and is to be supported by yearly collections throughout our circuits, and any endowments which our friends may think proper to give and bequeath."

During its ten years' history, Cokesbury College acquired a respectable fame. It was a favorite resort of the itinerants, and creditable to the Church. It was destroyed by fire, December 7, 1795. Asbury was in Charleston, South Carolina, when he

received the news; he wrote in his journal: "We have now a second and confirmed account that Cokesbury College is consumed to ashes, a sacrifice of £10,000 in about ten years. If any man should give me £10,000 per year to do and suffer again what I have done for that house, I would not do it. The Lord called not Mr. Whitefield nor the Methodists to build colleges. I wished only for schools—Dr. Coke wanted a college. I feel distressed at the loss of the library."

¶The impression made on the English preachers by their American brethren is worthy of notice.) When Whatcoat and Vasey heard some of them, at the General Conference, they were surprised, and declared that they had not heard their equal in the British Connection, except Wesley and Fletcher.

Nelson Reed's word-encounter with "the little Doctor," at one of the early Baltimore Conferences, is thus told by an old member of the body:

Nelson Reed commanded great attention as a preacher. He had a strong, round, full but not very melodious voice; and I presume he never found himself in any audience where it was not easy for him to make himself heard to the extreme limit. His sermons were generally argumentative and thoroughly wrought, and seemed to require not much of passion in the delivery. He was deeply versed in the science of theology, having given to it a large amount of study, and from his rich stores of Biblical and theological knowledge he drew largely in every sermon that he preached. He used to be called by a homely nickname, which, however, in that part of the country indicated the high estimation in which he was held; it was nothing more nor less than the "bacon-and-greens preacher," by which it was intended to be understood that his preaching was of the most substantial and nourishing character. I remember to have heard of an incident in the earlier history of Mr. Reed that may serve to illustrate his remarkable fearlessness and energy. It occurred in the Conference which was then holding its session in Baltimore. ¶Dr. Coke, one of the superintendents of the Church, was present; and one of the striking features of his character was that he was impatient of contradiction, and not wholly insensible to his own personal importance. ¶He had on this occasion introduced some proposition in the General Conference, which seemed to some of the preachers a little dictatorial; and one of them, an Irishman, by the name of Matthews, who had been converted in his native country from Romanism, and had fled to this country from an apprehension that his life was in danger at home, sprung to his feet, and cried out, "Popery, popery, popery!" Dr. Coke rebuked the impulsive rudeness of Matthews, when he replied in his Irish manner, "Och!" and sat down. While the Conference was now in a state of great suspense and agitation, Dr. Coke seized the paper containing his own resolution, and, tearing it up, not in the most moderate manner, looked round upon the preachers, and said, "Do you think yourselves equal to me?" Nelson Reed instantly rose, and turning to Bishop Asbury, who was also present,

said: "Dr. Coke has asked whether we think ourselves equal to him; I answer, Yes, we do think ourselves equal to him, notwithstanding he was educated at Oxford, and has been honored with the degree of Doctor of Laws; and more than that, we think ourselves equal to Dr. Coke's king." The Doctor now rose, with his passion entirely cooled off, and said, very blandly, "He is hard upon me." Bishop Asbury replied, "I told you that our preachers are not blockheads." The Doctor then asked pardon of the Conference for his abrupt and impulsive demonstration, and thus the matter ended.

¶ The General Rules as drawn up by the Wesleys were adopted without alteration by the first Societies in America.<sup>7</sup> However, they were not published in any edition of the "Discipline" until 1789, when this clause of prohibition appears for the first time: "The buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or† children, with an intention to enslave them." By whom or how this clause was introduced, history does not tell. It clearly refers to the African slave-trade, which the laws of the Republic repressed, as piracy, from the year 1808.

¶ The first allusion to emancipation occurs in an informal Conference called to meet in Baltimore 1780;† in anticipation of the regular session which met in Virginia, and which had been committed to the "ordinances."—"Question: Ought not this Conference to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves to give promises to set them free? Answer: Yes." The language is emphatic, but advisory, as to the membership: "We pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom."\* Though the Baltimore section represented a minority of the traveling preachers, the anti-slavery element had strong representatives in the other section, which met at Manakintown, notably—James O'Kelley; and doubtless this deliverance of the minority would have been agreeable to a majority of the united body. The sentiment of freedom for all men, at that time, prevailed extensively with Americans; they had just come out of a fight for freedom. ¶ Wesleyan preachers especially shared in the anti-slavery feeling; and not a few cases of emancipation occurred as they pressed their views upon the consciences of Christian masters who were accustomed to regard them as spiritual guides.)

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\* Methodism thus early recorded its protest against negro slavery, anticipating its abolition in Massachusetts by three years, in Rhode Island and Connecticut by four years. (Stevens's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church.)

At the time, Methodism was hardly known by name in those States. Climatic and commercial and social reasons led to their abolition of negro slavery.



Others took the ground of Pauline casuistry: "Neither if we emancipate, are we the better; neither if we emancipate not, are we the worse." They saw the question of slavery not in an abstract but in a concrete form. It was a part of social life, as it had come down to them. It was wrought into domestic and industrial institutions, and was recognized and regulated by civil law. If they could have formed a community or State on theory, slavery would not have entered into it; it was an evil which they would have excluded by choice and on policy. But for a hundred and fifty years the ships of Bristol and Liverpool and Boston had been unloading captive slaves upon the shores of what is now the United States; and the unquestioned usages of Christian kings and governments, of Churches and ministers and people, had wrought them into the fabric of the community. In the language of the historian Bancroft, the institution had been "riveted by the policy of England, without regard to the interests or the wishes of the colony."

While there was abhorrence of the cruel cupidity that incited clannish wars on the Dark Continent, for the purpose of capturing barbarians and slaves there, to transport them into slavery here, the question remained for Christian men at the close of the eighteenth century: "What is the best thing now to be done?" To return the negroes to their native land required more ships than all Christian nations owned—leaving out of view a repetition of the modified horrors of the middle passage. Few would assert that they were prepared for self-support and self-government, and fewer still that half-reclaimed pagans could be benefited by being remanded into paganism. There was no provision for colonizing them on the American continent, and no proposition to enfranchise them as citizens. An impassable gulf stood in the way of a general amalgamation. Here and there a master might impatiently or conscientiously wash his hands of the great evil, and put an end to all questionings, so far as he was concerned, by an act of emancipation; but what of a universal law and movement in that direction?

A few well-meaning ecclesiastics, mostly without homes, without property, and without families, think a resolution of Conference or a clause in the Discipline can meet the case! No doubt they were honest; and no doubt their advice was declined by many who were equally honest; with this disadvantage in

the case of the latter—they were more exposed to the suspicion, and not unfrequently to the charge, of making up their judgment under the bias of self-interest. When Coke, immediately after the adjournment of Conference, was pressing its rash rules on emancipation, he met the pious Jarratt, who ventured to question the wisdom of the ecclesiastical action on the subject. "The secret is," says Coke, that "he has twenty-four slaves of his own; I am afraid he will do infinite hurt by his opposition to our rules." If slave-holding be a sin, condemned by the Bible, then might emancipation be not only *advised* but *required* by the Church, of all preachers and private members as well. But many Christians never could be convinced of this, with the Bible before them; hence the endless troubles and disputes that worried and divided the Church in America. A slave-holding local preacher, disciplined by Wesley himself, established the first Methodist Society in the Western Hemisphere.\* A better ordered Christian family was not to be found on the continent than at Perry Hall, in which it is likely the rules on emancipation were prepared for the approaching Conference by four or five worthy Englishmen, three-fourths of whom had not been in the United States quite two months. All Methodist history, all Bible history as well, demonstrates that Christian character of the finest and fullest type may be developed in Christian masters.

*that does  
not justify  
the Institution*

The traveling preachers and private members having been legislated for, the local preachers are reached at the regular Conference held in May, 1784.—"Question: What shall we do with our local preachers who will not emancipate their slaves in the States where the laws admit it? Answer: Try those in Virginia another year, and suspend the preachers in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey."

The extraordinary enactments of the Christmas Conference on this perplexing subject are here presented in full:

Question: What methods can we take to extirpate slavery?

Answer: We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established, excepting on the most pressing occasion; and such we esteem the practice of holding our fellow-creatures in slavery. We view it as contrary to the golden law of God on which hang all the

\*The true epoch of Methodism in the Western Hemisphere is 1760, when Gilbert formed the first Society at Antigua. Had its centenary been observed, all Methodists of the New World could have shared in its celebration, an advantage which the epoch of the Church, in neither the North American British provinces nor in the United States, admits. (Stevens's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Vol. II., page 379.)

law and the prophets, and the inalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution, to hold in the deepest debasement, in a more abject slavery than is perhaps to be found in any part of the world except America, so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.

We therefore think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us; and for that purpose  
 + we add the following to the rules of our Society, viz.:

1. Every member of our Society who has slaves in his possession shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistant (which notice the assistants are required immediately, and without any delay, to give in their respective circuits), legally execute and record an instrument whereby he emancipates and sets free every slave in his possession who is between the ages of forty and forty-five immediately, or at farthest when they arrive at the age of forty-five; and every slave who is between the ages of twenty-five and forty immediately, or at farthest at the expiration of five years from the date of said instrument; and every slave who is between the ages of twenty and twenty-five immediately, or at farthest when they arrive at the age of thirty; and every slave under the age of twenty as soon as they arrive at the age of twenty-five at farthest; and every infant born in slavery after the above-mentioned rules are complied with immediately on its birth.

2. Every assistant shall keep a journal, in which he shall regularly minute down the names and ages of all the slaves belonging to all the masters in his respective circuit, and also the date of every instrument executed and recorded for the manumission of the slaves, with the name of the court, book, and folio in which the said instruments respectively shall have been recorded; which journal shall be handed down in each circuit to the succeeding assistants [pastors].

3. In consideration that these rules form a new term of communion, every person concerned who will not comply with them shall have liberty quietly to withdraw himself from our Society within the twelve months succeeding the notice given as aforesaid; otherwise the assistant shall exclude him in the Society.

4. No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or so excluded, shall ever partake of the Supper of the Lord with the Methodists, till he complies with the above requisitions.

5. No person holding slaves shall, in future, be admitted into Society or to the Lord's Supper, till he previously complies with these rules concerning slavery.

*N. B.*—These rules are to affect the members of our Society no farther than as they are consistent with the laws of the States in which they reside. And respecting our brethren in Virginia that are concerned, and after due consideration of their peculiar circumstances, we allow them two years from the notice given, to consider the expedience of compliance or non-compliance with these rules.

How different are these rules from those with which the apostles of our Lord were sent forth to convert the world! It has been well remarked: "When Paul and Barnabas set out on their missionary tour through slave-holding Greece, they went unhampered with such instructions about slavery; but the children were wiser than the fathers, and it required the experience of a few sad years to teach Asbury and his associates that both



master and slave would perish if they persisted in their course." As to the method others pursued there is no record, but Coke improved the opportunity of large Virginia audiences to expound and defend the new rules and the new terms of membership,† unknown alike to Methodism and the New Testament. "The quarterly-meetings on this continent," he writes "are much attended. The brethren for twenty miles around, and sometimes for thirty or forty, meet together. The meeting always lasts two days. All the traveling preachers in the circuit are present, and they, with perhaps a local preacher or two, give the people a sermon one after another, besides the love-feast, and now the sacrament. On Saturday, April 9th, I set off with the friends to Brother Martin's, in whose barn I preached that day. The next day I administered the sacrament to a large company, and preached, and after me the two traveling preachers. There were thirty strangers, I think, in Brother Martin's house only, which obliged us to lie three in a bed. I had now for the first time a very little persecution. The testimony I bore in this place against slave-holding provoked many of the unawakened to retire out of the barn, and combine together to flog me (so they expressed it) as soon as I came out."

He passed on to North Carolina to meet Asbury, coming up from Charleston, at the Annual Conference at Green Hill's. When he reached North Carolina, finding that the laws of the State even then forbade emancipation, he exercised a prudence unusual with him, and preached simply the gospel; but the Conference, through his influence, passed the most decided resolutions on the subject, and insisted that the Church should take earnest measures to secure immediate emancipation. These resolutions accomplished nothing except to throw more serious obstacles in the way of the already embarrassed preachers.

As soon as the session was over, Coke returned into Virginia. "On Sunday, May 1," he says, "about twenty preachers met Mr. Asbury and me at Brother Mason's. One night we all slept at the same house, but it was so inconvenient to some of the preachers that they afterward divided themselves through the neighboring plantations, by which we lost about an hour in the mornings. A great many principal friends met us here to insist on a repeal of the slave rules; but when they found that we had thoughts of withdrawing ourselves entirely from the circuit, on

account of the violent spirit of some leading men, they drew in their horns, and sent us a very humble letter, entreating that preachers might be appointed."

Asbury's note on the same occasion is brief: "Rode to W. Mason's, where we are to meet in Conference. I found the minds of the people greatly agitated with our rules against slavery and a proposed petition to the General Assembly for the emancipation of the blacks. Colonel ——— and Doctor Coke disputed on the subject, and the Colonel used some threats; next day, Brother O'Kelley let fly at them, and they were made angry enough; we, however, came off with whole bones."

It is possible that what Coke, in his impetuous mood, mistook for a drawing in of their horns, on the part of the many principal members, meant something else. They saw that he was not to be reasoned with, and took other measures for saving the Church from ruin. June 1st, the last and most influential Conference for the year met at Baltimore. That was the place to make a final stand—where six months before the "slave rules" had been adopted. The preachers who had been abroad among the Societies and people then brought in a report of the damaging effect and well-ascertained impracticability of the said rules; and Coke himself, in the chair, made a virtue of necessity by conceding to their final repeal. Accordingly, in the Annual Minutes for 1785 the following notice was inserted: "It is recommended to all our brethren to suspend the execution of the minute on slavery till the deliberations of a future Conference; and that an equal space of time be allowed all our members for consideration, when the minute shall be put in force."\*

\* Now was their sublime hour, and the critical hour of the nation, in respect to this question. But they failed, and history must not evade the fact. They were persecuted and threatened, and sometimes mobbed; but many of their people, many slave-holders, sustained them. Emancipations were becoming frequent. The leading statesmen of the nation were with them in opinion. But Asbury and Coke both shrunk before the unavoidable difficulties of the question. It was natural that, in after years, they should believe it had been expedient to compromise with their opponents. (Stevens's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church.)

The distinguished author viewed this abolition crisis from an extremely Northern stand-point. Those who contemplate it from almost any other point of view are satisfied that, had the policy so promptly abandoned been persisted in, there would have been no Methodism in the Southern States. At that time there was very little anywhere else in America. And so, Methodism would have been abolished in the United States as the first result of abolitionism.

Asbury's note on that occasion is this: "June 1.—Our Conference began. I was unwell during the session; a blister running, applied for a pain in my breast. On Thursday the Doctor took his leave of America for this visit. We parted with heavy hearts. On Friday we rested from our labors and had a love-feast."

Coke sailed out of the harbor "with feelings sadder than he had for years experienced in taking leave of his ministerial brethren," and was absent two years.

Methodism, after this instructive experience of being wise above what is written, attended, for awhile without distraction, to her heavenly calling and greatly prospered; so that in the fourth year after the episcopal organization her ministry and membership were doubled, and the territory occupied was more than quadrupled. "The vexed question" was let alone; and in the Annual Minutes for 1787 the following timely and scriptural directions are found. Well would it have been for the Church and the country, and especially for the colored people, if all subsequent Conference action had been of the same nature:

What directions shall we give for the promotion of the spiritual welfare of the colored people?

We conjure all our ministers and preachers, by the love of God, and the salvation of souls, and do require them, by all the authority that is invested in us, to leave nothing undone for the spiritual benefit and salvation of them, within their respective circuits or districts; and for this purpose to embrace every opportunity of inquiring into the state of their souls, and to unite in Society those who appear to have a real desire of fleeing from the wrath to come; to meet such in class, and to exercise the whole Methodist discipline among them.

Asbury was now left alone in the episcopal care. That an Englishman should become so thoroughly Americanized is not a common thing. With strange impressions as he approached the shores of the New World, he exclaimed, "This is the land for me!" At the close of the war, writing to his old friend and fellow-laborer, George Shadford, he used this language:

I travel four thousand miles in a year, all weathers, among rich and poor, Dutch and English. O my dear Shadford, it would take a month to write out and speak what I want you to know. The most momentous is my constant communion with God as *my* God; my glorious victory over the world and the devil. I am continually with God. I preach frequently, and with more enlargement of heart than ever. O America, America! it certainly will be the glory of the world for religion. I have loved and do love America. Your old national pride, as a people, has got a blow. You must abate a little. O let us haste in peace and holiness to the king-



dom of peace and love, where we shall know, love, and enjoy God and each other, and all the differences in Church and State, and among private Christians, will be done away.

Asbury's bearing toward his senior colleague is one of the most interesting exhibitions of his character. He saw the weak points of Coke, and did what he could, quietly and delicately, to lessen the consequence of his blunders; but he also appreciated his piety, and paid respectful tribute to his learning and true greatness. We are reminded of the brave Braddock, who, when pushing his way into the wilderness, was modestly expostulated with by one Colonel George Washington, who knew the country and was practically acquainted with the business in hand. "What!" was the disdainful reply, "shall an American buckskin teach a British general how to fight?" The haughty commander was soon borne back on a litter, and his name forever associated with defeat.

Coke's missionary character was strongly developed, if not determined, by his American experience. He came in view of, and almost in contact with, Nova Scotia at the Christmas Conference; and during its session made the first collection on our shores for foreign missions, in behalf of that field. He continued his personal solicitations for its support and enlargement, after arriving in Europe, and published an "Address to the Pious and Benevolent," proposing an annual subscription for the support of missionaries, which is said to have been the first document of the kind. He also induced Wesley to send with him to that distant field three preachers—Hammet, Warrener, and Clark—as a reënforcement to Garrettson and his fellow-laborers.

In September, 1786, he embarked with them for Nova Scotia. By storms the ship was driven to the West Indies. The furious captain, having never encountered such perils on the deep, concluded that there was a Jonah on board, and threw Coke's papers and books overboard and was on the point of sending him after them. Providentially they reached Antigua, where Gilbert and Baxter had begun a good work, which was waiting for help. On Christmas-day the missionaries landed at St. Johns, and walking into the town met Baxter on his way to the chapel. Other islands were visited, and the missionaries distributed among them; and thus began the Wesleyan missions in the West Indies, redeeming the slaves from pagan ignorance, and numbering at a later day over fifty thousand communicants, with all the appoint-

ments of districts, circuits, and chapels, and well-appointed and well-supported religious teachers. A very harsh type of bondage prevailed in most of the islands. Preachers were often imprisoned, chapels closed, and negroes punished with severity for their religious profession and attendance; but the cause was God's, and it prevailed—not without martyrs. This mission-field became Coke's half-way house in his visitations to the American Church; and by his exertions and liberality it was not only reënforced and superintended, but his energetic influence with the home government more than once secured relaxations from the severity of the local laws. Charleston was the nearest port, where he arrived in time to join Asbury in the first South Carolina Conference of 1787, and in other sessions afterward.

It was well for the tranquillity of the American Church that Coke had this West India mission thrust upon him. It taught him a prudence in his bearing toward civil institutions, which he had not before shown, where slavery was concerned. If he had entertained public assemblies in Antigua with the same utterances on that subject that were made in Virginia, he would have destroyed the Societies gathered by Gilbert twenty years before. If the emancipation statute enacted at Baltimore had been proposed in Jamaica, the door to his missionaries would have been fast closed, and that noble chapter of negro salvation that adorns the history of Wesleyan Methodism would never have been written. In his transient visits of a few months to this continent, and passing rapidly from place to place, it was cheap and easy for him to indulge in quixotic schemes of philanthropy, and to stir up opposition—leaving Asbury and his patient and suffering colaborers to meet the consequences, and by their wise conservatism to save the imperiled cause; but when Coke came personally and practically face to face with the problem involved, and must choose between salvation and emancipation, he took the better course; for where his pragmatic temper did not mislead him, he was a wise man, and none could doubt his being a pious one.

About the year 1830, Richard Watson wrote the "Instructions to the Wesleyan Missionaries"—an official document worthy of the broad-minded author of the "Institutes" and of the Church whose missions are enlightening the world. Wise and holy men have characterized the "Instructions" as "apostolical." In all controversies—sectional, political, and ecclesiastical—for these

hundred years, the spirit and practice of these "Instructions" have governed that portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America who have really done any thing to promote the moral and religious welfare of negro slaves. We quote from this official document; it is worthy of careful perusal:

Those of you who are appointed to the West India colonies—being placed in stations of considerable delicacy, and which require from the state of society there a peculiar circumspection and prudence on the one hand, and zeal, diligence, and patient perseverance on the other—are required to attend the following directions, as especially applicable to your mission there:

Your particular designation is to endeavor the religious instruction and conversion of the ignorant, pagan, and neglected black and colored population of the island or station to which you may be appointed, and of all others who may be willing to hear you.

Where Societies are already formed, you are required to watch over them with the fidelity of those who must give up their account to Him who hath purchased them with his blood, and in whose providence they are placed under your care. Your labors must be constantly directed to improve them in the knowledge of Christianity, and to enforce upon them the experience and practice of its doctrines and duties, without intermingling doubtful controversies in your administrations, being mainly anxious that those over whom you have pastoral care should clearly understand the principal doctrines of the Scriptures, feel their renovating influence upon their hearts, and become "holy in all manner of conversation and godliness."

It is enforced upon you that you continue no person as a member of your Societies whose "conversation is not as becometh the gospel of Christ." That any member of Society who may relapse into his former habits, and become a polygamist, or an adulterer, who shall be idle and disorderly, disobedient to his owner (if a slave), who shall steal, or be in any other way immoral or irreligious, shall be put away, after due admonition, and proper attempts to reclaim him from the "error of his way."

Before you receive any person into Society, you shall be satisfied of his desire to become acquainted with the religion of Christ, and to obey it; and if he has not previously been under Christian instruction, nor baptized, you are, before his admission as a member, diligently to teach him the Christian faith, and the obligations which he takes upon himself by baptism.

You are to consider the children of the negroes and colored people of your Societies and congregations as a part of your charge; and it is recommended to you, wherever it is practicable and prudent, to establish Sunday or other schools for their instruction.

As in the colonies in which you are called to labor a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the committee most strongly call to your recollection what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted as a missionary to the West Indies—that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition. On all persons, in the state of slaves, you are diligently and implicitly to enforce the same exhort-



tations which the apostles of our Lord administered to the slaves of ancient nations, when by their ministry they embraced Christianity: "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." (Eph. vi. 5-8.) "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." (Col. iii. 22-25.)

You are directed to avail yourselves of every opportunity to extend your labors among the slaves of the islands where you may be stationed; but you are in no case to visit the slaves of any plantation without the permission of the owner or manager; nor are the times which you may appoint for their religious services to interfere with their owners' employ; nor are you to suffer any protracted meetings in the evening, not even at negro burials, on any account whatever. In all these cases you are to meet even unreasonable prejudices, and attempt to disarm suspicions, however groundless, so far as you can do it consistently with your duties as faithful and laborious ministers of the gospel.

As many of the negroes live in a state of polygamy, or in a promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, your particular exertions are to be directed to the discountenancing and correcting of these vices, by pointing out their evil, both in public and in private, and by maintaining the strictest discipline in the Societies.

The [missionary] committee caution you against engaging in any of the civil disputes or local politics of the colony to which you may be appointed, either verbally or by correspondence with any persons at home or in the colonies. The whole period of your temporary residence in the West Indies is to be filled up with the proper work of your mission.

The sound Christian principles of this document governed the united Methodism of America down to 1844, maugre local factions and temporary exceptions. Thus access was had alike to the master and the slave, by a ministry bearing with them "the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." And thus, after the jurisdictional division of that date, the section of American Methodism which continued to adhere to these scriptural principles was enabled, under God, to present phenomenal results in the moral and religious culture of "the servile progeny of Ham." Not only were the slaves, who labored and worshiped in contact with the white population, educated and elevated and evangelized to a degree far above any thing attained or attainable in their native land; but to those masses of negroes seg-

regated on the rice and sugar and cotton plantations, under climatic conditions agreeable to their tropical habits but dangerous for white residents, missionaries were sent who, constrained by the love of souls, cheerfully submitted to the social inconveniences and malarious perils of the situation. By their efforts much people was added to the Lord. Chapels were built, and vast congregations of blacks were gathered and ministered to in doctrine and discipline and sacraments. Sunday-schools were formed and catechisms prepared for them, and the children of slaves were taught the truths of Christianity.\*

When Coke landed on the continent, Black Harry, unable to read, was the most advanced specimen of African Christianity he met with. On the general emancipation, effected by the Civil War, Southern Methodism showed thousands of negro preachers, exhorters, and class-leaders, who could read their Bibles and edify their congregations. Many of them were counted, by those who controlled the civil government of that day, fit for legislators and senators.† And when the sons of Wesley, from all parts of the world, gathered at City Road Chapel in Ecumenical Conference, African bishops were there as representative members, who had never seen Africa. They had been born and con-

\* In 1860, Southern Methodism numbered in its membership 207,766 negroes, and over 180,000 negro children, under catechetical instruction. By a persistent maneuver it has been attempted to shift the odium of slavery upon those with whom it ended, instead of those with whom it began; upon those connected with its only redeeming feature, instead of those whose connection with it was marked alone by lucre and cruelty. At the Convention of Delegates from the thirteen States (Philadelphia), to consult upon the formation of a Constitution, the subject of slavery was referred to two committees successively. The majority of the first were *Northern* men. They reported (Aug. 8, 1787) a recommendation that the slave-trade should be legalized perpetually. This committee was composed of five persons—Rutledge, Randolph, Gorman, Ellsworth, and Wilson. The first *two* from the South, the last *three* from the North. The majority of the second were *Southern* men. They recommended that the slave-trade should *not* be extended beyond the year 1800. The committee who reported this amendment consisted of eleven persons—Langdon, King, Johnson, Livingston, Clymer, Dickenson, Martin, Williams, Pinckney, Baldwin, and Madison. The first *five* represented Northern States, the last *six* Southern States. The constitutional provisions on this head would never have prolonged this infamous traffic to the year 1808, if either Massachusetts, or New Hampshire, or Connecticut, had stood by Delaware and Virginia, in that crisis of the country, and like them voted *against* the extension. But the profits of New England's ships had to be protected.

† President Lincoln's emancipation proclamation was issued January 1, 1863.

verted and reared in slavery, as modified by Christian influence, and they gratefully acknowledged Methodist ministers as their spiritual benefactors. Their forefathers had been brought over under the decks of the slave-ships of England and New England; *they* went back, from the pupilage of Methodism in the slave States, as cabin passengers in steam-ships. Their forefathers had been idolaters, abject *gregree* worshipers; *they* returned as redeemed Christian men and ministers—the Lord's freedmen. While these black bishops came from the fields of Southern slavery, over which Methodism persisted in her benignant and thankless but successful labors, none were present at that grand synod from the continent of Africa.

Never in the history of the race, if we may rely on the census, did a given number of Africans so multiply and increase as did the negro slaves of the United States for a century following these instant measures of Bishop Coke and his party for emancipation. This speaks for their physical comfort. Never did an equal number of Africans, anywhere else or at any time, attain to an equal intellectual, moral, and religious standard. The heathen Church-membership of all the missionary societies and stations, in all parts of the world, did not equal the colored membership of Methodism in the Southern States. To this may be added the colored membership of the Baptists—only a little below that of the Methodists—and the colored membership of other Churches, which cared for the bond as well as the free, and the problem is furnished approximately with facts for its solution. Humanity, inspired with religious sentiment, views with awe such a continental movement of Providence—transporting one race across the ocean to the home of another to be Christianized, and making the subjection of one to the other the condition of its instruction. The man-stealer and slave-trader meant it for evil, but God meant the relation of master and servant for good. What more is to come of it, we wait the unfolding of hidden things to see.

Some elevated seers profess to have caught a glimpse of the redemption of the Dark Continent, that has defied all other missionary enterprise, by the return of the best portion of its redeemed children. It is for the Church, in the future as in the past, to do the present duty, guided by the plain truths of Divine revelation, and not by the shifting principles of human revolutions: assured that God is no respecter of persons; that all races,



the weak as well as the strong, the black as well as the white, are alike the objects of his fatherly love; and that "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him."

The unbiased historian of the time coming, who reviews the course of Methodist legislation on slave-holding, will probably give this opinion: If such legislation was founded on scriptural authority, it did not go far enough; if it had no such foundation, it went too far. A law is made for preachers which is not applied to the people, as though a separate moral code existed for each class; also, one part of the land is legislated for to the exclusion of another. Stringent emancipation rules are enacted in 1804, and followed by the clause: "The members of our Societies in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee shall be exempted from the operation of the above rules." Again—on the last day of the next quadrennial meeting: "Moved from the chair, that there be one thousand Forms of Discipline prepared for the use of the South Carolina Conference, in which the section and rule on slavery be left out. Carried."

In six months, the emancipation enactments of the Christmas Conference were annulled on the spot. Methodism as a broad and beneficent power was thus saved to the kingdom of heaven and to the world. Otherwise, it must have been cut off from the people it has blessed, and would speedily have degenerated into a narrow, fretful combination for social reform, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The rescue of the new ecclesiastical organization from such a fate was a mercy to the slave as well as to the master. Natural freedom, sweet as it is, is infinitely unimportant, a mere secularity, when compared with that spiritual freedom which God, at so great cost, has provided for every man through the gospel. In God's order, St. Paul being judge, the primary concern and position belongs to soul-emancipation. Let the gospel have free course; and if by its effects upon the master or the servant, or both, the way is prepared for, and the consequence points to, temporal freedom—well. In the meantime to leave the whole subject where the Bible leaves it, and to bring it under the Bible treatment specifically provided, was always the wish of a growing number of American Methodists. But they were in connection, highly prized, with others who earnestly favored and pressed a secular and more aggressive policy; and hence the

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language of compromise in the Discipline, and contradictory, inconsistent, varied, and vexing legislation on the subject. After the division of Episcopal Methodism into two independent jurisdictions, each body followed its tendency, and in less than twenty years reached its position. The Northern section, which all the while had numbered more or less slave-holders in its communion, accepted "the new terms of communion" proposed in the Christmas Conference, and in 1864 unqualifiedly made slave-holding a bar to membership. The Southern section, six years before that, had struck out all special legislation on the subject.

Bishop Asbury, avowedly and of conviction an anti-slavery man, looked at the whole subject in a practical light. When he saw how every act of ecclesiastical interference with a civil institution provoked new restrictions and prohibitions by the civil power and blocked up the way of the messengers of peace, he recorded in his journal (Feb. 1, 1809) this matured conviction: "We are defrauded of great numbers by the pains that are taken to keep the blacks from us—their masters are afraid of the influence of our principles. Would not an *amelioration* in the condition and treatment of slaves have produced more practical good to the poor Africans than any attempt at their *emancipation*? The state of society, unhappily, does not admit of this; besides, the blacks are deprived of the means of instruction—who will take the pains to lead them into the way of salvation, and watch over them that they may not stray, but the Methodists? Well; now their masters will not let them come to hear us. What is the personal liberty of the African, which he may abuse, to the salvation of his soul—how may it be compared?"

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Wesley's Requests not Complied With—Leaving his Name Off the Minutes—The Offense and Rebuke—Methodist Episcopacy the First in America—True to the Primitive Type—Ordinations of Luther and Wesley—Charles Wesley's Death.

WHILE independence was being secured and organized by the Conference of 1784, the importance of union found early expression. Hence this minute: "Question: What can be done in order to the future union of the Methodists? Answer: During the life of the Reverend Mr. Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready, in matters belonging to Church-government, to obey his commands. And we do engage after his death to do every thing that we judge consistent with the cause of religion in America, and the political interests of these States, to preserve and promote our union with the Methodists in Europe."

Within three years this engagement was put to a severe test. So well had Freeborn Garrettson acquitted himself in Nova Scotia that Wesley saw in him an instrument needing only to be clothed with large powers for achieving the greatest results, and he sent a request to the Conference (1787) for his ordination as superintendent, or bishop, for the British dominions in America—a diocese comprising not only the north-eastern provinces and the Canadas, but also the West India Islands. Coke, as Wesley's delegate and representative in the matter, asked Garrettson if he would accept the appointment. Garrettson, more surprised than pleased at the affair, writes:

I requested the liberty of deferring my answer until the next day. I think on the next day the Doctor came to my room and asked me if I had made up my mind to accept of my appointment; I told him I had upon certain conditions. I observed to him that I was willing to go on a tour, and visit those parts to which I was appointed, for one year; and if there was a cordiality in the appointment among those whom I was requested to serve, I would return to the next Conference and receive ordination for the office of superintendent. His reply was, "I am perfectly satisfied," and he gave me a recommendatory letter to the brethren in the West Indies, etc. I had intended, as soon as Conference rose, to pursue my voyage to the West India Islands, to visit Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, and in the spring to return. What transpired in the Conference during my absence I know not; but I was astonished, when the appointments were read, to hear my name mentioned to preside in the Peninsula.



The Conference declined to elect him, says one, because if ordained for the Provinces he must be confined wholly to that field; and he was not inclined to expatriate himself. But the true reason seems to have been the unwillingness of his brethren to lose Garrettson. He was retained in the States and returned to his old field of labor and triumph on the Maryland shore, whence, as we have already seen, he was the following year transferred to New York, and planted Methodism in the Hudson Valley. Wesley was disappointed and grieved; nor was this all. At the same time he had directed that Richard Whatcoat be ordained a joint superintendent with Asbury. This was a wise selection, as subsequent events showed; for thirteen years afterward he was chosen, but was too old and feeble then to do justice to himself or the office. The Conference declined compliance in this case also. Jesse Lee's account of the matter is:

When this business was brought before the Conference, most of the preachers would not consent to it. The reasons against it were: (1) that he was not qualified to take the charge of the Connection; (2) that they were apprehensive that if Mr. Whatcoat was ordained, Mr. Wesley would likely recall Mr. Asbury, and he would return to England.

Dr. Coke contended that we were obliged to receive Mr. Whatcoat, because we had said in the Minutes when we were first formed into a Church in 1784: "During the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready, in matters belonging to Church government, to obey his commands."

Many of the members argued that they were not at the Conference when that engagement was entered into, and they did not consider themselves bound by it. Other preachers, who had said they were "ready to obey his commands," said they did not feel ready *now* to obey. The preachers at last agreed to depart from that engagement which some of the elder brethren had formerly entered into, and in the next printed Minutes that engagement was left out. They had made the engagement of their own accord, and among themselves, and they believed they had a right to depart therefrom, when they pleased, seeing it was not a contract made with Mr. Wesley, or any other person, but an agreement among themselves. It was further argued that Mr. Wesley, while in England, could not tell what man was qualified to govern us, as well as we could who were present and were to be governed. We believed also that if Mr. Wesley was here himself he would be of the same opinion with us. We then wrote a long and loving letter to Mr. Wesley, and requested him to come over to America and visit his spiritual children.

This step of receding from the above engagement was afterward considered by some disaffected persons as improper. If there was any thing improper in the business, it was in entering into the engagement, and not in departing from it.

Wesley's name was displaced from the next printed Minutes entirely by the omission of this "engagement" clause. It looked

badly, and he was offended at the turn things had taken. How far this casting off of his name and authority might imply a present or future departure from the Founder's principles was not an irrelevant question in his mind. "For this," writes Asbury, "Mr. Wesley blamed me, and was displeased that I did not rather reject the whole Connection, or leave them, if they did not comply. But I could not give up the Connection so easily, after laboring so many years with and for them."

Disaffected persons made sinister use of the fact that in the new edition of the Discipline, which left Wesley's name out, the word *bishop* was used instead of his chosen *superintendent*, as a personal title of Coke and Asbury. The word had been used in the designation of their office from the organization of the Church, and this change, indorsed by the Conferences, was ever afterward continued in the Discipline.\*

In the correspondence of the next year, an "objurgatory epistle" appears, in which Wesley reminds Asbury: "There is indeed a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans and the relation wherein I stand to all the Methodists. You are the elder brother of the American Methodists; I am, under God, the father of the whole family." And then he indulges in a sharp rebuke to his son in the gospel:

But, in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid, both the Doctor and you differ from me. I study to be little; you study to be great. I creep; you strut along. I found a school; you a college! nay, and call it after your own names! O beware! Do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and "Christ be all in all!" One instance of this, your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me *bishop*! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this!

The concluding words, "Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart," are in keeping with the tenor and the purpose of the epistle to rebuke display and the vaulting ambition which some had unjustly laid to Asbury's charge. "Had Mr. Wesley been in America," says a writer of a later day, "and witnessed Mr. Asbury's manner of life, throughout the whole of his

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\* Instead of "Question 1. Who are the superintendents of our Church for the United States? Answer. Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury," the new edition read, "Question 1. Who are the bishops of our Church for the United States? Answer. Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury."

long and arduous ministry in this country, we are confident he never could have expressed himself to that devoted and holy man in the style of this letter. In spirit, in conversation, in deportment, in dress—in short, in whatever pertained to his person, his equipage, and his entire movements—Mr. Asbury was a model of apostolical simplicity; nor was any man, not even Mr. Wesley himself, ever less justly liable to the imputation of strutting than he.”

Wesley had in his eye the airs and pretensions of “the mitred infidels” and lordly prelates of his own land; he was jealous over his American children “with godly jealousy” lest their simplicity of character should be corrupted. He saw in the personal title, the being *called bishop*, pomp and parade, official arrogance and exclusiveness; and recent events had sharpened his pen. This growing independence naturally excited his parental solicitude. “Did he not upon this occasion,” says his chosen English biographer, Moore, “a little forget what he had written in his address to the Societies in America, after their separation from the mother country: ‘They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church; and we judge it best that they should stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free.’”

At the date of this letter, Asbury was making the grand tour of the continent, along which we have followed him in a former chapter, reaching from the sea-shore to the Mississippi Valley, and from Charleston to New York, climbing hills and swimming rivers, ordaining missionaries at their outposts, and setting in order the Churches upon a scale of labor and fatigue and progress unequalled by Wesley himself, because England afforded no equal theater of action—and all on a salary of sixty dollars a year: “soaring, indeed,” as he admits, “but over the tops of the highest mountains.”

The apparent discourtesy and blunder—called in the pamphlet literature of the day “the leaving Mr. Wesley’s name off the American Minutes”—was repaired next year, thus: “Who are the persons that exercise the episcopal office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America? John Wesley, Thomas Coke, and Francis Asbury.” This act of respect was followed by another question and answer, which guarded the exclusive authority of the American Church: “Who have been elected, by the



unanimous suffrages of the General Conference, to superintend the Methodist Connection in America? Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury."

This matter would hardly have occupied more than a paragraph in history, but for the fact that on this letter, more than on any thing else, the opponents of Methodism have founded their charge that Wesley did not design to establish the American Methodist episcopacy, but that Coke and Asbury exceeded his intentions. Quotations from this letter have been incessantly made, in a form well adapted to produce a false effect, for it can be rightly comprehended only by the plain circumstances of the case. The disingenuous and illogical uses which an episcopal party in this country has endeavored to make of these expressions of Wesley have strangely enough been shared by some seceders from Episcopal Methodism who attempt to convict the two Bishops of usurping an office which Wesley never meant to confer. The history of the whole transaction as already given, and in every material point allowed by these persons, would seem to make argument with them hopeless; with others, of more candid temper, it is needless.

No case can be better made out before a competent tribunal than that John Wesley, upon maturest deliberation and counsel, purposed and took all formal measures to establish and perpetuate an episcopacy for American Methodism, upon a presbyterial basis. Men, according to their notions, may differ and dispute about the sufficiency or the insufficiency of that basis, the scripturalness or the unscripturalness of that transaction; but there can be no reasonable doubt as to what was intended and done. John Wesley belonged to that class of Episcopalians who believe that episcopacy is not a distinct order, but a distinct office, in the ministry; that bishops and presbyters, or elders, are of the same order, and have essentially the same prerogatives; but that, for convenience, some of this order may be raised to the episcopal office, and functions originally pertaining to the whole order—as ordination, for example—may be confined to them. The presbyter thus elevated is but *primus inter pares*—the first among equals.\*

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\* An exhaustive review of the facts connected with, and establishing, Wesley's Episcopal organization of American Methodism may be found in Stevens's History (Vol. II.). This unanswerable argument has properly been made to do service as an Appendix to the American edition of Tyerman's Life of Wesley, correcting the English biographer at a material point.

Richard Watson, in condition to know the initial history of ordinations for the Methodist Episcopal Church, says: "Their episcopacy is founded upon the principle of bishops and presbyters being of the same *degree*—a more extended *office* only being assigned to the former, as in the primitive Church. For though nothing can be more obvious than that the primitive pastors are called bishops or presbyters indiscriminately in the New Testament, yet at an early period those presbyters were, by way of distinction, denominated bishops, who presided in the meetings of the presbyters, and were finally invested with the government of several churches, with their respective presbyteries; so that two *offices* were then, as in this case, grafted upon the same *order*." Mr. Watson adds that "such an arrangement was highly proper for America," and that "the bishops of the Methodist Church in America have in practice as well exemplified the primitive spirit as in principle they were conformed to the primitive discipline."

The following remarks are from an authority little less eminent than the above:

It is clear that the New Testament does not enforce any ecclesiastical code! We have no pattern of the Christian Church given in Mount Zion, as was given to Moses in Horeb; no dimensions, furniture, utensils, priestly robes, specific manner of service, as was the case in the Jewish temple. The simple reason is, Christianity is designed to be universal, to embrace the whole family of man, and to give its light, grace, holiness, and blessings to all the world. How, then, can this system minister its mercy in the same modes? The New Testament furnishes us with great principles, general rules, precedents, and examples, for our guidance; and then affords freedom as to the circumstantialia of time, manner, and the employment of means.

The provision made by Mr. Wesley to meet the wants of Scotland may be adduced. It was found that the usual mode of doing good in England did not suit the state of things in that country; and in consequence of this absence of adaptation, the work of God did not prosper as in other places. Did the founder of our Societies determine, doggedly and pertinaciously, to adhere to one mode of operation? Instead of this, he deviated entirely from his accustomed practice, ordained ministers for that portion of the gospel field, and sanctioned Church principles which, to say the least, were very different from those he adopted in this part of the nation. In the American case we have another illustration of the point on which we are dwelling. When the United States had effected their emancipation from the mother country, Mr. Wesley considered himself at liberty to act with perfect freedom in the new territory, and, we may say, to develop his views and opinions fully; and, if we mistake not, it is to the American Methodist Episcopal Church that we are to look for the real mind and sentiments of this great man. Obstructions removed, he instantly seized the opportunity of appointing an entire

Church system, on the principle of moderate episcopacy. And if we may judge of the wisdom and piety of the design by its usefulness and success, certainly we shall be prepared to consider it most providential.\*

Luther and his associated clergy believed that a system of Church government embracing a degree of ministerial imparity was expedient and scriptural, and organized Churches with superintendents or bishops, resting explicitly upon a *jure ecclesiastico* and not upon an assumed and fictitious *jure divino* claim. For the former claim, the precedent and practice of primitive Christianity may be adduced. For the latter, no solitary passage of Scripture can be pleaded. The Papal theory alone is consistent on this point: the visible Church is a mediator between man and God, sacramental union with which alone gives us access to salvation; the ministry is a priesthood, having had sacerdotal grace transmitted to it for administering valid sacraments; the instrument of transmission is the "sacrament of orders," which is intrusted exclusively to the hands of a bishop, who was ordained by some other bishop, who likewise was ordained by some other, until by tactual succession or ascension we come to the very apostles of Christ themselves. This is a theory which one can understand. It is consistent as well as plain. † It lacks but one thing—it is not true! † To this theory, premises and conclusion, Wesley like Luther gave a distinct, unmistakable denial. † And surely he was in good company when he said: "The uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove."

Among other Churchmen of high authority, Bishop Hoadley asserts: "It hath not pleased God, in his providence, to keep up any proof of the least probability, or moral possibility, of a regular, uninterrupted succession; but there is a great appearance, and, humanly speaking, a certainty, that the succession hath often been interrupted." And the learned Archbishop Whately: "There is not a minister in all Christendom who is able to trace up, with approach to certainty, his spiritual pedigree. The

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\*Methodism in its Origin and Economy, by James Dixon, D.D., ex-president of the Wesleyan Conference, 1848.

† The Wesleyan like the Lutheran movement originated its episcopacy, and conserved and perpetuated its spiritual forces, upon the presbyterial basis. Martin Luther, assisted by three other presbyters, ordained the first Lutheran bishop, Nicholas Amsdorf, January 20, 1542. Thus was originated the Lutheran episcopacy of Germany and Europe.



transmission of orders from the apostles to an English clergyman of the present day must have been through a great number of intermediate persons. Now, it is probable that no clergyman in the Church of England can trace up his spiritual genealogy from bishop to bishop, even so far back as the time of the Reformation. There remain fifteen or sixteen hundred years during which the history of the transmission of his orders is buried in utter darkness."

That such a theory of the ministry finds any acceptance is because certain principles of human nature favor it. It pleases the "clergy," for it invests them with a mysterious power, an awful sanctity; and this gives them importance apart from moral character and mental ability. The same principle long kept the heathen oracles in credit. It is a pleasing fancy for the people—this getting something, tangibly, by a direct line from the apostles! The idea of an unbroken chain of ordained persons is readily taken in, and that some special virtue must attach to their ministrations is admitted with unthinking facility. Baptism at their hands works inward regeneration; by their manipulations "the real presence" is communicated to bread and wine; absolution pronounced by them goes farther and means more than if the magic words were pronounced by others. Here is a refuge for formality and carnal security.

Fortunately American Methodism has no such evil inheritance as this fancied "succession" carries in its very nature; for it seems to be inevitably corrupting to Protestantism. It is a leaven that works, wherever lodged, and prevails sooner or later. Like the interdicted omer of manna which "bred worms and stank"—like the brazen serpent that Israel burned incense to, and the reforming king broke in pieces and put away as *nehushtan*—so is the claim of the "succession," upon whatever historical pretense. The Low-church or Evangelical party in the English Establishment was a power for good, when half a century ago a knot of learned and earnest Churchmen began to push so-called succession to its ultimate consequences. The essential principle of Romanism is in it. Perversions to popery became frequent and popish tendencies grew under the name of Puseyism, until we have seen the Evangelical party wane, and the dominating influence and the great preferments pass into the hands of its opponents. The moderate or evangelical party in the Protestant Episcopal Church

of America was declared in his time by Bishop White to include the large majority of his co-religionists; but it has nearly disappeared, and an attempt was lately made by its representatives to organize a Reformed Episcopal Church, free from the sacerdotal tendencies and doctrinal corruptions of the parent body.

The Methodist Episcopacy, making no claim to this spurious line, rescues the name of bishop from perversion, and redeems this ancient and efficient and unifying form of government from suspicion. It gives to a pure system of doctrine the benefit of an apostolical system of propagandism and government, while maintaining the unity of the Spirit in fraternizing with all evangelical denominations. Methodist episcopacy was first in America, by several years in the persons of its bishops as well as in the organization of its communicants, and it remains the best type. It has central government, without the subtle temptation or prescription to lord it over God's heritage. It has enough of ritual to insure decency and order in public worship, and to meet the demands of a true *cultus*—without the baldness and barrenness and individual irregularity that offends the æsthetic taste. It has a conservative force to maintain sound doctrine with an aggressive spirit that promulgates it. It is not so nicely balanced as to stand still; for where large responsibility is involved it confers large power, but holds it to account. Supervision is everywhere, and this supervision is itself periodically supervised.

John Wesley, knowing his brother's opinions, did not take him into his counsels when arranging for the American Church. Upon Coke's return to England, with his ordination-sermon and journal, and "Minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America," the Christmas Conference matters were much discussed. Charles was deeply wounded, and attacked Coke and the proceedings. There seems to have been no doubt, no misunderstanding on that side of the water as to what had been intended and done on this. Charles Wesley exclaims against his brother's act: "Dr. Coke's Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore was intended to beget a Methodist Episcopal Church here. You know he comes, armed with your authority, to make us all Dissenters. One of your sons assured me that not a preacher in London would refuse orders from the Doctor." One Dr. Seabury, of Connecticut, after waiting two years upon the English bishops for ordination to the episcopacy, and failing,

went to the non-juring bishops of Scotland and got the "succession" from them. In time it came to be regarded as an inferior article. He was very kind, offering to ordain such Methodist preachers as were "qualified;" and Charles Wesley complains that his brother and Dr. Coke did not wait for Dr. Seabury and get orders on that line.

Coke, condemned in the public prints for his proceedings, publicly replies that he had done "nothing without the direction of Mr. Wesley." The charge of ambition had been more than intimated, and Wesley replies to his brother: "I believe Dr. Coke is as free from ambition as from covetousness. He has done nothing rashly that I know. If you will not or cannot help me yourself, do not hinder those that can and will. I must and will save as many souls as I can while I live, without being careful about what may *possibly be* when I die." Poets often prophesy; and Charles uttered grievous vaticinations of the fate of the American Methodists: "They will lose their influence and importance; they will turn to vain janglings; they will settle again upon their lees, and, like other sects of Dissenters, come to nothing!"

His biography, an ex-president of British Methodism, says:

Their Church has indeed violated the theory of a succession of bishops, as a distinct order, from the apostles. It has an episcopacy which was originated by a presbyter; but it has not been a whit the less salutary on this account. As an instrument of extensive spiritual good to the souls of men, it appears to immense advantage when compared with the American episcopacy with which Bishop Seabury stood connected. In the Methodist Church the great design of the sacraments, of preaching, and of ecclesiastical discipline, has been answered. The members are undeniably justified through faith in the blood of Jesus, and are sanctified by the power of the Holy Ghost. Husbands and wives, parents and children, the aged and the young, the rich and the poor, the master and the servant, have exhibited, and still exhibit, both in life and death, the piety, the zeal, the charity, the justice, the holiness, peace, and joy of apostolical Christianity, which Charles Wesley has described in his incomparable hymns. Could he have witnessed the triumphant extension of the work of God in connection with the ordinations, he would have smiled at his honest mistake, and have wiped away his needless tears.

And yet the appointment of a bishop by presbyters is no novelty, as the early history of the Church of Alexandria demonstrates, as well as that of the Lutheran Church in Germany. In the appointment of Dr. Coke, Mr. Wesley did no more than the great German reformer had done to meet the wants of the people whom God had given him. Every reader of ecclesiastical history knows that Martin Luther, again and again, with the aid and concurrence of his fellow-presbyters, ordained bishops for the Protestant Church of Germany.\*

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\* Life of C. Wesley, by Thomas Jackson.



The life and ministry of Charles Wesley closed out becomingly. Time brings old age; the active workers slacken their pace, and then cease. One of the most affecting incidents connected with advancing life is the loss of early friends, who successively retire to "the house appointed for all living." This is a warning and a preparation to survivors. The death of Perronet was soon followed by that of Fletcher—the first peaceful, the last triumphant. On his death-bed, having the most elevated and impressive views of the atonement, Fletcher often exclaimed :

"Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,  
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries!"

and added, in the full exercise of an appropriating faith:

"Mercy's full power I soon shall prove,  
Loved with an everlasting love!"

In this manner the eloquent and successful advocate of the Wesleyan theology closed his eyes upon earth and passed to the enjoyment of his endless reward.

In old age Charles Wesley's employment and pleasures were reduced to three things—preaching the gospel, making hymns, and comforting those that mourn. In the pulpit the flow of spirits and of words and of thoughts was often sluggish; but morning and evening of Lord's-day, he desired to be there. "In such cases," says his biographer—waiting for utterance and aid, "he usually preached with his eyes closed; fumbled with his hands about his breast; leaned with elbows upon the Bible; and his whole body was in motion. He was often so feeble as to be under necessity of once or twice calling upon the congregation to sing, that he might recover himself and be able to finish his discourse." In prayer he was copious and mighty, especially upon sacramental occasions, when he seemed to "enter into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus." Enfeebled by years and disease, he continued his public religious services, in this spirit and manner, till within a few months of his death. For condemned felons his compassionate concern continued undiminished to the last. He visited them in their cells; wept with them because of their guilt and misery; taught them the way to the mercy-seat of God, through the death of his Son; prayed with them. The last publication he sent from the press was a tract of twelve pages, entitled, "Prayers for Condemned Malefactors," consisting of hymns adapted to their use.

At this period Charles Wesley's appearance and habits were peculiar. He rode every day (clothed for winter even in summer) a little horse gray with age. When he mounted, if a subject struck him, he proceeded to expand and put it in order. He would write a hymn thus given him, on a card (kept for that purpose), with his pencil in short-hand. Not unfrequently he has come to the house in the City Road, and, having left the pony in the garden in front, he would enter, crying out, "Pen and ink! pen and ink!" These being supplied, he wrote the hymn he had been composing. When this was done, he would look round on those present, and salute them with much kindness; ask after their health; give out a short hymn, and thus put all in mind of eternity. He was fond of that stanza upon those occasions:

There all the ship's company meet.

When confined to his bed, he wished to hear nothing read but the Holy Scriptures. "I visited him several times in his last sickness," said Dr. Whitehead, his physician, "and his body was indeed reduced to the most extreme state of weakness. He possessed that state of mind which he had been always pleased to see in others—unaffected humility, and holy resignation to the will of God. He had no transports of joy, but solid hope and unshaken confidence in Christ, which kept his mind in perfect peace." All his prayer was for "patience and an easy death." Some person remarked that the valley of the shadow of death was hard to be passed. "Not with Christ," he replied. While in extreme feebleness, having been silent and quiet for some time, he called Mrs. Wesley to him, and requested her to write the following lines at his dictation:

In age and feebleness extreme,  
Who shall a sinful worm redeem?  
JESUS, my only hope thou art,  
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;  
O could I catch a smile from thee,  
And drop into eternity!

With this swan-like note, the sweet singer glided into the upper choir. For fifty years Christ had been the subject of his sermons and of his songs; and he may be said to have died with a hymn to Christ upon his lips, March 29, 1788, at the advanced age of seventy-nine years.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

The Council: Its Failure—O'Kelley's Schism—Hammett's—Charge of Heresy—General Conference of 1792: Some of its Work—Republican Methodists—Presiding Elders: Their Office and its Duties Defined—John Wesley's Death.

THE want of a bond of union among the various Conferences, that met separately in annual session, was attempted to be supplied by a Council. The plan of it was approved by a majority of the preachers in 1789, and the Council held its first meeting that year. The preamble of the enacting clause runs thus:

Whereas the holding of General Conferences on this extensive continent would be attended with a variety of difficulties, and many inconveniences to the work of God; and whereas we judge it expedient that a Council should be formed of chosen men out of the several districts as representatives of the whole Connection, to meet at stated times.

The composition of the proposed body was then stated:

Our bishops and presiding elders shall be the members of this Council; provided that the members who form the Council be never fewer than nine. And if any unavoidable circumstance prevent the attendance of a presiding elder at the Council, he shall have authority to send another elder out of his own district to represent him; but the elder so sent by the absenting presiding elder shall have no seat in the Council without the approbation of the bishop or bishops, and presiding elders present. And if, after the above-mentioned provisions are complied with, any unavoidable circumstance, or any contingencies reduce the number to less than nine, the bishop shall immediately summon such elders as do not preside, to complete the number.

The powers of the Council, apparently great, were really very small. "These shall have authority to mature every thing they shall judge expedient: (1) to preserve the general union; (2) to render and preserve the external form of worship similar in all our Societies through the continent; (3) to preserve the essentials of the Methodist doctrines and discipline pure and uncorrupted; (4) to correct all abuses and disorders; and, lastly, they are authorized to mature every thing they may see necessary for the good of the Church, and for promoting and improving our colleges and plan of education." A delegated General Conference seems not yet to have been thought of. The *maturing* Council could only make "recommendatory propositions," but its own make-up, as part of a *legislative* system, was open to objection.



There was a provision which not only required unanimity in the Council, but which, moreover, declared that "nothing so assented to by the Council shall be binding in any district until it has been agreed upon by a majority of the Conference held for that district." This neutralized any possible utility of the whole arrangement, and instead of securing uniformity, made non-conformity probable and more pronounced. "For," said Jesse Lee, who opposed the new plan, "if one district should agree to any important point, and another district should reject it, the union between the two districts would be broken, and in process of time our United Societies would be thrown into disorder and confusion."

The first session of the Council was held at Cokesbury, December 1, 1789, consisting of Richard Ivey, from Georgia; R. Ellis, South Carolina; E. Morris, North Carolina; Philip Bruce, Northern District of Virginia; James O'Kelley, Southern District of Virginia; L. Green, Ohio; Nelson Reed, Western Shore, Maryland; J. Everett, Eastern Shore; John Dickins, Pennsylvania; J. O. Cromwell, New Jersey; and Freeborn Garrettson, New York. Bishop Asbury says, "All our business was done in harmony and love." "The concerns of the college," "the printing business," and "funds for our suffering preachers on the western frontiers," were subjects discussed and acted on at this meeting. The Council was pleased with its work and closed a session of several days with this conclusion: "Considering the weight of the Connection, the concerns of the college, and the printing business, it is resolved that another Council shall be convened at Baltimore on the 1st day of December, 1790."

As a legislative expedient the Council was a failure, gaining neither time nor unanimity in the adoption of necessary measures. The subsequent construction, that its acts were binding on every one when concurred in by a majority of all the members of the several Conferences, was a strained construction. It looks like an after-thought. But to quiet the discontent it had excited and to meet the want which this ill-contrived and unfortunate expedient had clearly failed to meet, a General Conference was called for November, 1792.

Two effects, attributed to the Council, long survived it. One was the interpolation of the General Rules with the slavery clause. No Conference put it there, and no editor or printer ever confessed doing it. It happened in the time of the Council,

the limit of whose powers was not well defined, in its own estimation. The other effect was the O'Kelley schism. James O'Kelley was one of the thirteen preachers selected by the Christmas Conference for the office of elder; and from this period until his withdrawal from the Church, he continued without interruption to fill a prominent position on the "Southern District of Virginia," which embraced nearly all the southern counties of the State with a portion of North Carolina. He exercised great influence over the preachers and people in that part of the work, and as a leader was regarded as hardly second to Asbury. A member of the Council, he was present at the first session, and sanctioned its suggestions. But he had scarcely returned home before he began a course of systematic opposition.

Whether this desertion of his colleagues, and, at first, covert war on the Council, resulted from a conviction of the impropriety of its acts, or from jealousy of Bishop Asbury's growing influence, must here be left undetermined. If his objections were founded on the acts of the Council, he should have opposed them in its session, where one dissent would have defeated them. If his mind had changed as to the expediency of the Council itself, he should have opposed it on its own merits. The industrious and insidious manner in which he assailed Asbury, and endeavored to undermine the Bishop's influence with all who were under his own, makes an unfavorable impression. He did not attend the second session of the Council, but called a convention of the preachers of his district a month before it met; and the subjects proposed for this irregular consultation and the spirit evoked were such as to alarm Coke, when informed of them, for the stability of the Church. The Council was his hobby, by which he endeavored to convict Asbury of designs the most ambitious and unscrupulous. However, to the surprise of those who had been training under him to attack it, the Bishop, so soon as the general dissatisfaction became evident, made no stand for it. The second session, for the sake of peace, sent out no "recommendatory propositions," and a third session was never held.\*

The General Conference assembled in Baltimore, November 1st, 1792. No such assemblage had been held for eight years. There is no "official" record of its proceedings, but Lee, who was present, represents the gathering of preachers as numerous,

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\*Life and Times of McKendree, by Paine; Vol. I., page 128.

"from all parts of the United States where we had any circuits formed." They came with "the expectation that something of great importance would take place."

The first business of the Conference was a revision of the Discipline. On the second day O'Kelley brought forward an amendment to one of the fundamental regulations of the Church. The amendment was in the following words: "After the bishop appoints the preachers at Conference to their several circuits, if any one think himself injured by the appointment, he shall have liberty to appeal to the Conference and state his objections, and if the Conference approve his objections, the bishop shall appoint him to another circuit." This proposition indirectly involved the administration of Asbury, and he retired from the body, leaving Bishop Coke to preside. O'Kelley's motion brought on a long debate: the arguments for and against the proposal were weighty, and handled in a masterly manner. "There never had been a subject before us," says a member, "that so fully called forth all the strength of the preachers. A large majority of them appeared at first to be in favor of the motion."

After much debate, John Dickins moved to divide the question thus: 1. Shall the bishop appoint the preachers to the circuits? 2. Shall a preacher be allowed an appeal? Upon deliberation this form of question was allowed. The first question being put, it was carried without a dissenting voice. But when they came to the second, "Shall a preacher be allowed an appeal?" all the ground was gone over again, and the renewed contest waxed warmer and stronger. Sunday intervened; it was a high day. "On Monday," says Lee, "we began the debate afresh, and continued it through the day; and at night we went to Mr. Otterbein's church, and again continued it till near bed-time, when the vote was taken, and the motion was lost by a large majority."

Thomas Ware, a member of the Conference, says: "Had O'Kelley's proposition been differently managed it might possibly have been carried. For myself, at first I did not see any thing very objectionable in it; but when it came to be debated, I very much disliked the spirit of those who advocated it, and wondered at the severity in which the movers, and others who spoke in favor of it, indulged in the course of their remarks. The advocates of the opposite side were more dispassionate and argumentative. They urged that Wesley, the father of the Methodist



family, had devised the plan, and deemed it essential for the preservation of the itinerancy. The appeal, it was argued, was rendered impracticable on account of the many difficulties with which it was encumbered. Should one preacher appeal, and the Conference say his appointment should be altered, the bishop must remove some other one to make him room, in which case the other might complain and appeal in his turn; and then again the first might appeal from the new appointment, or others whose appointments these successive alterations might interrupt. Hearing all that was said on both sides, I was finally convinced that the motion for such an appeal ought not to carry."

The people had an interest in the issue, and Asbury, by way of caution, had put in a word for them: "Are you sure that if you please yourselves the people will be as fully satisfied? They often say, 'Let us have such a preacher;' and sometimes, 'We will not have such a preacher; we will sooner pay him to stop at home.' Perhaps I must say, 'His appeal forced him upon you.'"

The next morning a letter was received from O'Kelley and a few of his adherents, informing the Conference that as their resolution had been rejected they could no longer retain their seats in that body. Efforts were at once made to conciliate them; a committee was appointed to wait on O'Kelley and those who were joined with him, and if possible to persuade them to resume their seats; but the effort utterly failed.

A few days after, he and his partisans set out on their return to Virginia, "taking their saddle-bags, great-coats, and other bundles, on their shoulders or arms, and walking on foot to the place where they had left their horses, which was about twelve miles from town." "I stood and looked after them," says Lee, "as they went off, and observed to one of the preachers that I was sorry to see the old man go off in that way, for I was persuaded he would not be quiet long, but he would try to be the head of some party."

This debate consumed a week; it was time well spent; and then the Conference addressed itself to other work which did much to shape the polity of the Church.

The name of presiding elder appears for the first time in the Discipline, and the office is defined. It had grown up out of the elders, sparingly elected in 1784, whose duty was to give the sacraments to the churches and to supervise, in a general

way, the circuits among which they moved. With Wesley's approval the number was afterward increased. A doubt had arisen as to the extent of their powers within their districts, and whether a bishop could appoint or remove them. Their designation to their respective sections had been without respect to time. O'Kelley had traveled the same district in Southern Virginia ever since his ordination, and had preached there several years before. It is supposed that disadvantages resulting from his case led to the present limitations of the office. The new law provided that the bishop should appoint the presiding elders, not allowing them a longer term than four years on any one district. It was likewise determined that the districts should be formed according to the judgment of the bishop, yet so as not to include more than twelve nor less than three circuits in a district. Moreover, it was also said, "The bishop shall appoint the time of holding the District Conferences."

An Annual Conference, including several districts as now, had not then been developed. It was not until four years later that the territory of the Church was mapped out into Conferences in the present way, with names and definite boundaries. The presiding elder was a sort of diocesan bishop, holding his four Quarterly Conferences for each circuit, and then, if the general superintendent be absent, presiding at the "Yearly Conference." It was a great step forward, in the efficient and thorough organization of Methodism as an Episcopal Church, when this officer's place and powers were defined. "Methodism," said one of its earliest and best expounders, "is union all over; we must draw resources from the center to the circumference." As the general superintendent unifies the Connection, taking the oversight of all the churches, and transferring preachers from one point to another as they are needed, without regard to Conference lines, so the presiding elder unifies the district, with its various circuits, stations, and missions. It is his duty: "To travel through his appointed district; in the absence of the bishop, to take charge of all the elders, deacons, traveling and local preachers, and exhorters in his district; to change, receive, and suspend preachers in his district, during the intervals of the Conference, in the absence of the bishop, as the Discipline directs; to oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the Societies in his district; to take care that every part of our Discipline be enforced in his

district; to attend the bishops, when present in his district, and to give them, when absent, all necessary information, by letter, of the state of his district." Such officers are the supplement of the general itinerant superintendency; without them it would be impracticable on a continental scale. They complete the local supervision and make the general one possible. Being selected for experience and ability, they make a large amount of ministerial talent in young or untrained men available, who otherwise could not safely be intrusted with the pastoral care. By their help, advice, and direction, the feeble parts are strengthened and temporary vacancies supplied. They restrain the erring, encourage the despondent, plan for improvement and progress, maintain uniformity and continuity, and being appointees of the bishop, work with him to Connectional unity.

To the salaries of the traveling preachers (sixty-four dollars a year) an addition was made of their traveling expenses. "Their traveling expenses were to include ferriage, horse-shoeing, and provisions for themselves and horses on the road, when they necessarily rode a distance." A new rule was made allowing a preacher to receive money, if offered (but not to charge), for performing the marriage ceremony; but an old one was continued in force forbidding him to accept a gift for baptism or burial. In all this we see the reputation for mercenary character which the preceding clergy had established. Methodist preachers were so determined to steer clear of that rock they ran upon the opposite one. Dearly did they pay for it through many years. But the object of this and similar regulations, as stated by the historian, was worthy of the purest times: "To keep all the preachers as nearly on an equal footing as possible in their money matters, that there might be no jealousies or envyings among us; but that we, like brethren of the same family, might all labor together in the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Provision was made for the trial of preachers for immorality, or improper conduct, and for heresy. Also for arbitration between private members, in cases of debt or disputes about money—thus promoting peace, and keeping them out of unseemly and strife-provoking lawsuits.

Directions were given for the conduct of public worship, securing a due proportion of reading the Scriptures, singing, and prayer in the congregation, as well as preaching. Special atten-



tion was given to singing, because in that part of divine service a disposition was manifested, from the beginning, to take from the body of the people what belonged to them, by the introduction of strange and impracticable tunes. "We do not think," say the law-makers, "that fugue tunes are sinful, or improper to be used in private companies, but we do not approve of their being used in our public congregations, because public singing is a part of divine worship, in which all the congregation ought to join." "Before these rules were formed," remarks the historian of that Conference, "a practice in the public congregations had prevented many of the old saints from singing at all, and singing in public worship was likely to be wholly confined to a few. It was always a custom among the Methodists for all the people in the congregation to sing. Singing being a part of divine worship, we encouraged all to worship God."

The right and order of appeal from the sentence of a lower to a higher Church-court were secured and regulated.

In their preface to "The Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America," the Bishops say: "We have made some little alterations in the present edition, yet such as affect not in any degree the essentials of our doctrines and discipline." And they add this general remark, which is an answer to all who captiously object to a *new* edition of the Discipline every four years: "We think ourselves obliged frequently to view, and review, the whole order of our Church, always aiming at perfection; standing on the shoulders of those who have lived before us, and taking advantage of our former selves."

This, which may be called the second General Conference, did not adjourn without providing for the assembling of a similar body. One of its principal members describes it:

Notwithstanding we had some close debates, and some distressing hours during that Conference, and with all, some of our preachers were so offended as to leave before the business was half finished, yet it was a comfortable time to most of us, and we were highly favored of the Lord with his presence and love in the last of our sitting. The proceedings of this General Conference gave great satisfaction to our preachers and people; and the divisive spirit which had been prevailing in different parts of our Connection, was considerably checked. And nothing that was done gave more satisfaction than the plan that was laid for having another General Conference at the expiration of four years from that time, to which all the preachers in full connection were at liberty to come. Some of the preachers who came to the Conference dissatisfied, at the close of the meeting were perfectly reconciled, and returned to their circuits fully determined to spend and be spent in the work of the ministry, and in the fellowship of the Church.

Bishop Coke went away with a higher estimate of the ability of American itinerants. "We continued our Conference," he says, "for fifteen days. I had always entertained very high ideas of the piety and zeal of the American preachers, and of the considerable abilities of many; but I had no expectation, I confess, that the debates would be carried on in so very masterly a manner; so that on every question of importance the subject seemed to be considered in every possible light."

As was prophesied, O'Kelley did not remain quiet long: he was soon destroying what he had helped to build up. Alluding to his failure to get the old plan changed at the late Conference, Asbury writes: "For himself the Conference well knew he could not complain of the regulation. He had been located in the south district of Virginia for about ten successive years; and upon his plan might have located himself, and any preacher or set of preachers, within the district, whether the people wished to have them or not."

O'Kelley unfolded his scheme, on the way from Baltimore, to a young itinerant who was temporarily under his malign influence, but escaped out of the snare in time to be a burning and a shining light and a trusted leader.—It was, to have "a republican, no-slavery, glorious Church! Bishop Asbury was a pope; the General Conference was a revolutionizing body; the Bishop and his creatures were working the ruin of the Church to gratify their pride and ambition!"

He labored diligently to sow broadcast the seeds of strife and disunion. By private letters and public harangues he strove to excite the public against Asbury and the Church government. Writing to a friend of former days, he said: "No doubt you have heard I had resigned my place in Conference. I protest against a consolidated government, or any one lord, or archbishop, claiming apostolic authority, declaring to have the keys. Thus our ministry have raised a throne for bishops, which being a human invention, a deviation from Christ and dear Mr. Wesley, I cordially refuse to touch." In one of the pamphlets which soon began to be issued, Asbury was called the "Baltimore Bull," and a rude picture of a bull's head graced the title-page.

O'Kelley adroitly availed himself of the political agitations of the day and organized his associates under the popular name and title of "Republican Methodists."

"It was enough," says Jesse Lee, "to make the saints of God weep between the porch and the altar, and that both day and night, to see how the Lord's flock was carried away captive by that division." He thus describes it:

All were to be on an equal footing. One preacher was not to be above another, nor higher in office or in power than another. No superiority or subordination was to be known among them. They promised to the lay members of the Church greater liberties than they had formerly enjoyed among us, and prevailed with a good many of our people to leave us and join them. In some places they took from us whole Societies together, and in many places they drew off a part. Others they threw into confusion; and in some places they scattered the flock and separated the people one from the other, without securing them to their own party. Brother was turned against brother, and one Christian friend against another. The main contention was about the government of the Church; who should govern it, or in what manner it ought to be governed. In this mist of darkness and confusion, many religious people, who had been warm advocates for the life and power of religion, began to contend about Church government, and neglect the duties of religion, till they were turned back to the world, and gave up religion altogether.

The spirit of division prevailed chiefly in the southern part of Virginia, and in the border counties of North Carolina, in all which region the personal influence of O'Kelley has been seen. It also extended beyond these limits. We find the first two missionaries in Kentucky—Ogden and Haw—drawn away into his scheme. And in other places, he had adherents.

In 1801, O'Kelley issued a pamphlet in which he announced himself and his adherents as "The Christian Church," renouncing all rules of Church government but the New Testament, as interpreted by every man for himself. Some of his Societies readily assumed the high-sounding name, others hesitated and divisions followed. One party clung to O'Kelley as "The Christian Church;" another followed John Robertson as "Republican Methodists;" and yet another, under the lead of Guirey and others, set up for themselves under the title of "Independent Christian Baptist Church."\* Lee, writing in 1809, says: "They have been divided and subdivided till at present it is hard to find two of them that are of one opinion. There are now but few of them in that part of Virginia where they were the most numerous."

The hurt done may in part be estimated by figures. At the close of 1791, the Methodist membership numbered 63,269 whites, and 12,884 colored—total 76,153. It was not until 1801 that these figures were again reached. At the end of the first four years of

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\* Bennett's Memorials of Methodism in Virginia.



Episcopal Methodism, as already stated, its membership was doubled; and in the next three, it was more than doubled. Moving forward at this rate, it was arrested by a decade of strife. The lowest point is shown in the returns of 1796, when 45,384 white members, and 11,260 colored were reported. The Church then recovered its tone; the falling away ceased; and the next year showed a gain of 1,060 white, 958 colored members; and there was a steady annual increase afterward.

Bishop Asbury met the Virginia Conference at Manchester, November 26—twelve days after the General Conference adjourned. The plague was begun; he threw himself promptly into the leader's stronghold, and did what he could to arrest the evil. Among the painful incidents of the session was a letter from a young preacher—Wm. McKendree—respectfully declining to take an appointment for the ensuing year. He was a lately ordained elder, and from the beginning of his ministry had been in O'Kelley's district. The arch-agitator had nursed him diligently for years, and had shaken his confidence in Asbury and the Church government. He had the young man for his traveling companion to Baltimore, roomed with him, and brought him away on the failure of his motion. McKendree did not withdraw; he wanted time to consider. His biographer tells the rest:

Shortly after the close of the Conference, Bishop Asbury passed through the neighborhood of Mr. McKendree's father. The mind of young McKendree was ill at ease about his duty, and having had an interview with the Bishop, he was treated with great kindness, and invited to travel with him awhile. The invitation was accepted, and as they went from one appointment to another, through the eastern portion of Virginia, they calmly and fully discussed the subjects of Church government—especially Methodist government—the late attempt to change the system, the course and design of Mr. O'Kelley, and the consequences likely to result to himself and others. Bishop Asbury did not correspond to the description which Mr. McKendree had heard of him. Instead of being austere, proud, ambitious, and bent upon subjecting the liberties of the membership and the ministry to his will, he was surprised to find him humble, devout, self-denying, and unceasing in his efforts for the welfare of the Church. He soon understood, too, the evil consequences which would inevitably follow the adoption of O'Kelley's late favorite measure—the ruin of the general superintendency, and of the whole itinerant system. The spell of the enchanter was broken; humbled and mortified at his own weakness, with characteristic candor, he confessed his error, was received again into the confidence of the noble and warm-hearted old Bishop, and at once sent to the city of Norfolk.\* )

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\* Paine's Life and Times of McKendree.

It was only a month's suspension of an itinerant ministry which ended, as we shall see, only with his useful and holy life. This shaking up, this honest doubt, led him to study the whole subject closely, and McKendree became the constitutional expounder of Methodism. He mastered the philosophy as well as the details of its government, and was prepared, at a future crisis, to stand in the breach and save it against a host of strong men.

While Asbury spared no pains to expose O'Kelley's errors and thwart his plans and counteract his mischievous influence, he kept his heart right toward him. At Winchester, hearing that his former friend was lying ill, the Bishop sent two brethren to say that he would wait on him if he desired it. They "met in peace, asked of each other's welfare, talked of persons and things indifferently, prayed, and parted in peace. Not a word was said of the troubles of former times." This was their first interview after the rupture, and the last. O'Kelley lived to be ninety-two years of age, dying in 1826. "He saw the man whom he had sought to ruin descend to his grave in peace and full of honors, mourned by grateful thousands as the Father of American Methodism. He saw his place filled and his principles defended by another, whom he had fondly marked for a leader in his own ranks. He saw hundreds of his own followers forsaking him, and rallying again to the standard of Episcopal Methodism. He saw those who remained scattered and broken into contending factions. All this he lived to witness, and in the face of all, the stern old man clung to his cause with a heroism worthy of a better one, and with faltering voice and failing strength proclaimed his confidence in its ultimate success."

Impartial history requires us to say we find no evidence of the heresy alleged against James O'Kelley—that he was unsound on the Trinity, and hastened his secession for fear of being brought to trial. An error so radical must have worked out, in him and his followers, striking manifestations; but none such appear. The few preachers and people who continue to represent him represent also, so far as known, a sound doctrine and experience. The trouble was governmental, not doctrinal; and in the later adjustments of Episcopal Methodism, occasion could hardly be found for its recurrence.

Evil was in the air. The spirit of dissension was rife. About this time the Church in Charleston was humbled and brought

very low by a schism that extended to Georgetown and Wilmington, and ate like a canker into the country congregations from those centers. Another young minister, who subsequently entered into the best Methodist history, also barely escaped this snare. The father of William Capers had been an officer with Marion and Sumter in the Revolution; was a man of wealth and social position, and one of Asbury's best friends. There was a camp-meeting near Rembert Hall, in November, 1808. Bishop Asbury was there. The late Bishop Capers, then just entering the ministry, in his autobiography gives the leading facts:

In the former days my father's house was one of his favorite homes. My father was of the first race of Methodists in South Carolina, and a decided and influential one; he had declined from his spirituality some time after his removal to Georgetown District; and not till the present year had he recovered it. On Dr. Coke's visit to America in 1791, he was accompanied from the West Indies to Charleston by William Hammett, and this Mr. Hammett choosing to remain in Charleston, found some occasion to object to Mr. Asbury and the American preachers, as if they had done him a wrong on account of his devotion to Mr. Wesley; Mr. Asbury being (as he represented) ambitious of supplanting Mr. Wesley with the American people. Mr. Hammett had the confidence of Mr. Wesley (by what means does not appear) to the last of his life; and on that foundation he raised his Society of Primitive Methodists. And when we consider that there were then no Methodist books published in America, and the people knew little of the action of the Conferences, but what they got verbally from the preachers, and that Mr. Hammett had been introduced by Dr. Coke as one of the most godly as well as the most gifted of the preachers, the wonder is not that he should have drawn off to himself, under a banner inscribed "Wesley against Asbury," some of the most influential of the people, but we might wonder rather that he did not seduce them all; and the more, as he was unquestionably an eloquent and able man, of fine person and engaging manners, and at first vastly popular. But his work did not prosper. He had estranged his adherents, of whom my father was one, from the rest of the Methodists, whom they called "the Asbury Methodists," for no good result either to himself or them. I was introduced to Bishop Asbury immediately on his coming to the camp-meeting, as I happened to be in the preachers' tent at the time of his arrival. I approached him timidly, you may be sure, and with a feeling of profound veneration; but "Ah," said he, "this is the baby; come and let me hug you;" meaning that I was the baby when he was last at my father's house. On my father's entering the tent, he rose hastily from his seat and met him with his arms extended, and they embraced each other with mutual emotion. It had been seventeen years since they had seen each other; and yet the Bishop asked after Sally and Gabriel, as if it had been but a few months, and repeated gleefully, "I have got the baby!" It was evident that no common friendship had subsisted between them; and how much happier had those years of estrangement been to my honored father if they had been passed in the fellowship which he had been seduced to leave! I hate schism, I abhor it as the very track and trail of him who "as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour."



Hammett's schism was not so extensive as his brother Irishman's; he lacked his fierce energy and his large acquaintance. In Charleston enough members were drawn away from the "Blue Meeting-house," and enough outsiders enlisted to build a fine chapel and parsonage. After fifteen or twenty years, by purchase or by treaty, this Trinity Church and other Hammett church property in other places, with most of the membership, reverted to the old side or Asbury Methodists. The oak is rooted by storms as well as by sunshine. In the long run it may be well that Episcopal Methodism endured such ordeals at the beginning; but the souls of men are in the crucible, and humanity grudges a wasteful consumption.

The two bishops were passing through Virginia, when Asbury made this entry in his journal for April 29, 1791:

The solemn news reached our ears that the public papers had announced the death of that dear man of God, John Wesley. He died in his own house in London, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, after preaching the gospel for sixty-four years. Brother Coke was sunk in spirit, and wished to hasten home immediately. For myself, notwithstanding my long absence from Mr. Wesley, and a few unpleasant expressions in some of his letters the dear old man has written to me (occasioned by the misrepresentation of others), I feel the stroke most sensibly. Dr. Coke set out for Baltimore in order to get the most speedy passage to England; leaving me to fill the appointments.

At Alexandria the solemn news was confirmed—John Wesley had died March 2d. "Our people die well," was his thoughtful summary of the death-bed experiences of the first Methodists, half a century before; and his own death was no exception. The prayer that was often on his lips was answered:

"O that without a lingering groan  
I may the welcome word receive,  
My body with my charge lay down,  
And cease at once to work and live."

His journal shows this last birthday record: "June 28, 1790.—This day, I enter into my eighty-eighth year. For above eighty-six years, I found none of the infirmities of old age; my eyes did not wax dim, neither was my natural strength abated; but, last August, I found almost a sudden change. My eyes were so dim that no glasses would help me. My strength likewise now quite forsook me; and probably will not return in this world. But I feel no pain from head to foot; only it seems nature is exhausted; and,

humanly speaking, will sink more and more, till 'the weary springs of life stand still at last.'"

A month before that, he was making his tour in the North. One of his preachers writes: "In the latter end of May, Mr. Wesley visited us. He came from Glasgow that day (about seventy miles), but his strength was almost exhausted, and, when he attempted to preach, very few could hear him. His sight was likewise much decayed, so that he could neither read the hymn or text." And a month before that he preached at Bradshaw, where, on his tottering up the pulpit stairs, the whole congregation burst into a flood of tears. Wesley's old age was fruitful as well as beautiful. Marvelous had been the success of Methodism up to the year 1780; and, yet, the results during the last ten years of his life were more than double the united results of the forty years preceding.

At the age of seventy-five he published the first number of his *Arminian Magazine* (1778)—now the oldest in the world—and was its editor and most valuable contributor to the last year of his life; furnishing six sermons annually, fresh and vigorous. When eighty-five years old we find him breakfasting at three o'clock in the morning with a friend. Addressing his coachman at this early breakfast in the city of York, he said: "Have the carriage at the door at four. I do not mean a quarter or five minutes past, but four." He still preaches once or twice a day, but begins to find three sermons on Sunday not always convenient. Taking stock of himself at this time, he says: "It is true, I am not so agile as I was in times past. I do not run or walk so fast as I did; my sight is a little decayed. I find, likewise, some decay in my memory, with regard to names and things lately past, but not at all with regard to what I have read or heard twenty, forty, or sixty years ago; neither do I find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste, or appetite (though I want but a third part of the food I did once); nor do I feel any such thing as weariness, either in traveling or preaching; and I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons; which I do as readily, and I believe as correctly, as ever." To two things chiefly, under God's blessing, he thinks this prolonging of his tranquillity may be attributed—"to my having constantly, for above sixty years, risen at four in the morning; and to my constant preaching at five in the morning, for above fifty years."

The last letter he wrote to America bore date February 1, 1791, and was addressed to Ezekiel Cooper who died in 1847, "the oldest Methodist preacher in the world." He says:

Those that desire to write or to say any thing to me have no time to lose, for time has shaken me by the hand, and death is not far behind. I have given a distinct account of the work of God which has been wrought in Britain and Ireland for more than half a century. We want some of you to give us a connected relation of what our Lord has been doing in America since the time that Richard Boardman accepted the invitation and left his country to serve you. See that you never give place to one thought of separating from your brethren in Europe. Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue—

Though mountains rise, and oceans roll,  
To sever us in vain.

The death of Charles Wesley deeply and permanently affected him. He was far away on his wide field at the time his brother died and was buried; but it is recorded as a curious incident that (as was afterward ascertained) he and his congregation, at the very moment of his brother's exit, were singing:

"Come let us join our friends above  
That have obtained the prize."

A fortnight afterward he attempted to give out, as his second hymn, the one beginning with the words, "Come, O thou traveler unknown;" but when he came to the lines,

My company before is gone,  
And I am left alone with Thee,

the bereaved old man sunk down under uncontrollable emotion, burst into tears, and hid his face with his hands. The congregation well knew the cause of his speechless excitement; singing ceased; and the chapel became a Bochim. At length, Wesley recovered himself, rose again, and went through a service which was never forgotten by those who were present.

February 24, 1791, he rose at 4 A.M.; went to an appointment eighteen miles from London, and preached from "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near." This was Wesley's last sermon—the last of more than forty thousand. Such symptoms appeared on the 26th that a physician was called in. Sunday morning, the 27th, he seemed better, sat in his chair, looked cheerful, and repeated from one of his brother's hymns:

"Till glad I lay this body down,  
Thy servant, Lord, attend;  
And O my life of mercies crown  
With a triumphant end!"



And soon after, with marked emphasis, he repeated the Master's words—"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." "I want to write," said he. A pen was put in his hand, and paper was placed before him; but his hand had forgot its cunning. "I cannot," said the dying man. "Let me write for you," remarked his niece; "tell me what you wish to say." "Nothing," he replied, "but that God is with us." "I will get up," was his firmly expressed wish at another time, after repose; and, while his friends were arranging his clothes, Wesley began singing:

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath;  
And, when my voice is lost in death,  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers:  
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,  
While life, and thought, and being last,  
Or immortality endures."

Once more seated in his chair, in a weak voice, he sung what proved to be his last song on earth:

"To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
Who sweetly all agree."

His voice failed; he whispered: "Now we have done. Let us all go." Happy, but exhausted, he was put to bed, where, after a short but quiet sleep, he opened his eyes, and addressing the loving watchers who stood around him, said, "Pray, and praise!" They were at once upon their knees, and fervent were the dying patriarch's responses, especially to the prayer that God would still bless the system of doctrine and discipline which he had been the means of introducing into the world. On rising from their knees, he took hold of all their hands and with the utmost placidness saluted them, and said, "Farewell, farewell." A little after, a person coming in, he strove to speak, but could not. Finding they could not understand him, he paused a little, and then, with all the remaining strength he had, cried out, "The best of all is, God is with us!" and soon after, lifting up his arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice with a holy triumph not to be expressed, he again repeated the heart-reviving words, "The best of all is, God is with us."

Wednesday morning the closing scene drew near. A faithful friend prayed with him, and the last word he was heard to articulate was, "Farewell!" A few minutes before ten, without a groan, this beloved pastor of thousands entered into rest.

John Wesley needs no eulogy from his children. Methodists may not speak. Let others declare the truth.

"He was a man," says Lord Macaulay, "whose eloquence and logical acuteness might have rendered him eminent in literature; whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu; and who devoted all his powers, in defiance of obloquy and derision, to what he sincerely considered the highest good of his species."

"A greater poet may rise than Homer or Milton," writes Dr. Dobbin, of Oxford University, "a greater theologian than Calvin, a greater philosopher than Bacon, a greater dramatist than any of ancient or modern fame; but a more distinguished revivalist of the Churches than John Wesley, never."

The judgment of Southey, in a letter to Wilberforce, is: "I consider Wesley as the most influential mind of the last century—the man who will have produced the greatest effects, centuries, or perhaps millenniums hence, if the present race of men should continue so long."

March 30, 1876, Dean Stanley unveiled a monument, in Westminster Abbey, to John and Charles Wesley. "As you will see presently, when the monument is uncovered," said he, "John Wesley is represented as preaching upon his father's tomb; and I have always thought that that is, as it were, a parable which represented his relation to our own national institutions. He took his stand upon his father's tomb—on the venerable and ancestral traditions of the country and of the Church. That was the stand from which he addressed the world; it was not from the points of disagreement, but from the points of agreement with them in the Christian religion, that he produced those great effects which have never since died out in English Christendom."

A space in the wall on the south aisle of the venerable Abbey, three by nine feet, is filled with a massive white marble tablet. Within a sunken circle are medallion profiles, life-size, of the two brothers. Above, are their names, with date of birth and death. Below—"THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US." Beneath this quotation is sculptured, in bold bas-relief, John Wesley preaching on his father's tombstone. At the bottom is Charles Wesley's exultant exclamation:

"GOD BURIES HIS WORKMEN, BUT CARRIES ON HIS WORK."

## CHAPTER XXX.

Jesse Lee Enters New England—Inhospitable Reception—The Difficulties—Gains a Footing—The Need of Methodism There—Asbury Confirming the Work—Soule—Fisk—Hedding—Bangs—Boston Common—Success—Memorial.

A SCULPTOR, mallet and chisel in hand, stands before a fine block of marble. It is cold and hard, but he sees a warm and noble statue in it and falls to work to release it. So might Jesse Lee have contemplated New England. Soule and Hedding, Mudge and Merritt, Sabin, Broadhead, Fisk, Bangs, and Hunt, and others, are there, with a host of members true to their principles, earnest in their convictions; saving much and giving much; taking a great deal of interest in their neighbors' affairs and managing their own thriftily; the last field to be entered by Methodism and the first to report any thing like a well-endowed Methodist College; potentially fruitful of missionaries and Church historians—such a land was worth possessing.

As yet, Methodist preachers had gone round it: they had spread to Canada and Nova Scotia on the north; to Utica on the west, and entered the Valley of Wyoming; but no entrance had been effected into New England. Jesse Lee felt this to be his mission. He had been gradually approaching it; starting at Salisbury, thence to Baltimore, and thence to New Jersey, he was ready to cross the border and only waited the word from the general superintendent. He had heard of Yankee learning, without dismay. His library, itinerant like himself, embraced a Bible, hymn-book, and Discipline. In common with itinerants, it is likely that he wore a straight-breasted coat, and a white cravat without collar; that his face was smooth-shaven, and his hat had an ample brim; and he traveled on horseback. In the forks of the Yadkin he had picked up a little colloquial Dutch; and when to test his scholarship the parsons and school-masters, full of Greek and Latin, addressed him in an unknown tongue, he paid them back in their own coin. Ready and witty when self-defense called for it, he was also loving and pathetic: at once tender and sharp, the very man for such an enterprise. He possessed a courage which nothing could daunt, and a cheerfulness







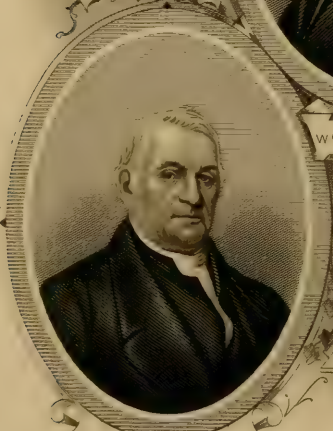
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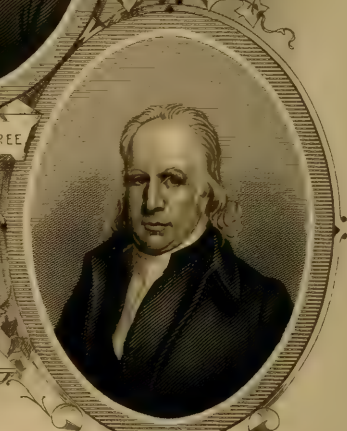
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ELIJAH HEDDING



ROBT R ROBERTS



that never failed. His style of address was full of shrewdness as well as of force, whereby he could rivet the attention of any audience, going straight to the hearts of his hearers, "putting them at once on the defensive if they were inclined to controversy, or carrying them completely with him if they were honest seekers after the truth." In person of magnificent presence, thirty-two years old, and above the ordinary size, he had the manners of a Christian gentleman, and could sing the Methodist hymns in a style that left little use for church-bells to call together his congregation. His crowning endowment for a mission among the descendants of the Puritans was an abiding conviction that he was directed by God to bestow on them some spiritual gifts which they needed. Full of the Holy Ghost and faith he did not expect a holiday recreation; he counted on difficulties and discouragements, but he had faith in the power of the gospel. It was the old battle of lamps and pitchers, of the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

"Stamford—Jesse Lee," was read out by Bishop Asbury at the close of Conference held in New York, May, 1789. Stamford was the first town in Connecticut over the border line, and really meant all New England, where Methodism had not a single member, and what had been heard of it had made the name synonymous with fanaticism and heresy. To the appointee the whole territory was new; and if he should enter any door, it would be after he had pushed it open. Three capital disabilities had to be met: He was from the South, a quarter from which the people he was sent to did not look for light; he was an Arminian, and hardly any thing worse could be said of his doctrine among the descendants of the Pilgrims, where predestination, election, reprobation, decrees, final perseverance, and kindred dogmas, were secured behind strong and venerable intrenchments; lastly, he was not, in technical phrase, an "educated minister." Among his first adventures, after crossing the line, was this: He alighted at the door of an inn, and told the hostess he was a preacher and wished to preach in the village. "Have you a liberal education, sir?" "Tolerable, madam; enough, I think, to carry me through the country."

Another peculiarity of the situation may be added: The land was divided into parishes and dotted over with meeting-houses, and it was held to be the duty of every citizen to support the



gospel just as much as to support the public roads or the public schools. The clergy were a ruling class in secular as well as in spiritual affairs; their salaries were raised by taxes collectable by law from unwilling parishioners; and for years no one could hold office unless he were a member of a Church of "The Standing Order"—that is to say, Orthodox Congregationalism. To be exempted from this tax one must certify to the parish authorities that he "did duty" in connection with some other religious Society. Thus the formation of other Societies within territory tributary to the "standing order" furnished an opportunity for persons to take themselves and their property out from under the operation of the Church tax law; on which account the setting up of any new religious organization was a serious affair, financially as well as theologically. It has been the fashion in certain quarters to accuse the old-time clergy of New England of "savage orthodoxy," in view of their opposition to the Methodist movement; but a careful study of the situation will show another side to the shield. It was not only the theology of Geneva and Westminster they were defending, but their political, financial, and social preëminence. "Free grace and free-will were bad enough, but free Churches were worse." There was too much freedom already; and if Methodist churches, on the voluntary system, were to become numerous, there would be a falling off in parish revenues.\*

When they questioned him about "principles," and argued on the "five points," Lee was not troubled; but he sorely felt the lack of hospitality. On reaching a house to which he had been invited, no one offered him a seat; helping himself to a chair, he tried to be at home; when the hour for preaching came, not one of the family would go; on his return from meeting, scarcely a word was spoken to him; the man of the house held prayers, and said nothing to his guest; in the morning the whole family slept against time, and Lee was compelled to leave fasting.

His first day's experience was often repeated: "June 17.—I set out with prayer to God for a blessing on my endeavors, and with an expectation of many oppositions." Arrived in Norwalk, he applied for a private house to preach in, but was refused. He then asked for the use of an old deserted building, but was again re-

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\* *History of Methodism*, by Rev. W. H. Daniels, A.M.

fused. He proposed to preach in a neighboring orchard, but was still repulsed. He took his stand at last under an apple-tree on the public road, surrounded by twenty hearers. "After singing and praying," he says, "I preached on 'Ye must be born again.' I felt happy that we were favored with so comfortable a place. After preaching I told the people that I intended to be with them again in two weeks, and if any of them would open their houses to receive me I should be glad; but if they were not willing, we would meet at the same place."

Sometimes he got the school-house, or a barn, or the court-house, or a private dwelling, for a preaching-place, and sometimes it was under the trees. Three months of chilling rebuffs and occasional welcomes passed, he preached at Stratfield, and after the sermon conducted "a kind of class-meeting," composed of about twenty persons. This led to the formation, the next day, of the first class, composed of three women, who, he says, "appeared willing to bear the cross, and have their names cast out as evil, for the Lord's sake." At Hartford he is allowed the State-house: "They were very solemn and attentive; many of them were deeply affected, and wept bitterly under the word. It appeared to me that God was opening the way for us." Returning, in his circuit, to this place, he records:

I was informed that several persons were awakened by my preaching when I was here before. The hearing of this humbled my soul in the dust, and strengthened my faith. Ah, Lord, what am I, that thou shouldst own my labors and comfort my soul? Not unto me, not unto me, O Lord, but unto thy name be the glory! At two o'clock they rang the bell, and we met in the State-house. I preached on 1 Thessalonians v. 19. I had a large number of hearers to speak to; and glory be to God for his goodness to me while preaching his word! I felt my soul happy in the Lord; the people heard with great attention, and with many tears.

In one of the villages of Connecticut there lived at this time an honest and intelligent blacksmith, who, when Lee appeared there, kept his family at home, lest they should become infected with the itinerant's heterodoxy. One of his sons, about twelve years old, heard of the arrival of the stranger. He was not allowed to hear him preach, but never forgot the marvelous rumors of his ministry. He was to become Lee's successor in this very field, and to do important service for his Church. Such, says his biographer, was Nathan Bangs's first knowledge of Methodism.

At Farmington, the itinerant came face to face with "principles," which means dispute. He was entertained by a Mr. W.:

We had been there but a little time before the old man began to talk about principles, and the old lady to prepare dinner. We continued the discourse till we had dined. When the old man found out that we believe a person might fall from grace and be lost, he discovered a good deal of anger, and said, "If David had died in the act of adultery, and Peter while swearing, they would have been saved." "Then," said I, "after a man is converted he is obliged to be saved; he can't help it." "Yes," said he, "he is obliged to be saved, whether he will or not, for it is impossible for him to help it." He said he would as soon hear us curse God at once as to hear us say that God would give his love to a person and then take it away. I told him God would never take it away, but we might cast it away. Seeing he was much ruffled in his temper, I thought it best to be moving; so we asked him the way to Mr. Coles's, but he would not tell us, for he said Mr. Coles would not like his sending such men to his house. However, we got directions from his wife, and then we set out. I shook hands with the old man, and told him I hoped God would reward him for his kindness.

After preaching at Fairfield, on a cold wintry night, December 24, he exclaimed: "To-night, thanks be to God, I was invited by a widow woman to put up at her house. This is the first invitation I have had since I first came to the place, which is between six and seven months. O my Lord, send more laborers into this part of thy vineyard! I love to break up new ground, and hunt the lost souls in New England, though it is hard work; but when Christ is with me, hard things are made easy, and rough ways made smooth."

Monday, the 28th, was the date of the second Society. "I preached," he writes, "in Reading, and found great assistance from the Lord in speaking. I felt that God was among the people. One or two kneeled down with me when we prayed. The lion begins to roar very loud in this place, a sure sign that he is about to lose some of his subjects. I joined two in Society for a beginning. A man who has lately received the witness of his being in favor with the Lord led the way, and a woman who, I hope, was lately converted, followed."

January 28, 1790. "I set out," he writes, "and my soul was transported with joy; the snow falling, the wind blowing, prayer ascending, faith increasing, grace descending, heaven smiling, and love abounding. I preached at Jacob Wheeler's, in Lime-stone, and after meeting formed a class, two men and two women. Perhaps these may be like the leaven hid in the three measures of meal, that they may leaven the whole neighborhood." After seven months' hard labor, he has three classes with an aggregate of eight members.



Lee had reported to Asbury and asked for help. He was holding a quarterly-meeting at Dantown, the last of February, in an unfinished church—the second one begun in New England—when he heard the news, joyful news to a solitary laborer: “Help was coming.” He describes the occasion:

Just before the time of meeting a friend informed me that there were three preachers coming from a distance to labor with me in New England. I was greatly pleased at the report, and my heart seemed to reply, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” When I saw them riding up I stood and looked at them, and could say from my heart, “Thou hast well done, that thou art come.” Jacob Brush, an elder, and George Roberts and Daniel Smith, two young preachers, came from Maryland, to assist me in this part of the world. No one knows, but God and myself, what comfort and joy I felt at their arrival.

Leaving the two circuits that he had organized in charge of these recruits—not quite an average of three members to each—Lee himself made a long excursion through the States of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, and back again to Connecticut. His eye was fixed on Boston, where he arrived July, 1790. For several days he sought for a preaching-place, but no door was opened to him. Boston was not conscious of wanting any thing in the way of religious instruction that a Methodist and an Arminian would offer.

After spending a week trying to find a place to preach, and being refused on every side, he borrowed a table, and placing it under the old elm near the center of the Common, he mounted it and began to sing and pray with a congregation of four persons: at the close of service it had increased to three thousand. The next Sabbath he repeated the experiment; but he did not effect a permanent footing, and passed on to Lynn, Newburyport, and Portsmouth. On his return, he tried Boston again, and had to resort to the old stand on the Common. On making another evangelizing tour, he returned to Boston, where he spent four weeks; but every house was closed against him. It was on the verge of winter and the Common was deserted, save by those who hurried across it, wrapped in cloaks, to their warm, cozy homes. Sad and weary, he sat down to ponder on what should next be done. In the midst of these discouragements, aggravated by an empty purse, he received a letter from a gentleman in Lynn, inviting him to his house. This was a ray of light; he went, letter in hand, to Lynn, and was cordially received. Here he preached the first Methodist sermon ever delivered in that town, and, February 20,

1791, formed a Society of eight members, which was increased to seventy in three months. The 14th of June they began to build the first Methodist church in Massachusetts, and dedicated it on the 26th: a mere wooden shell, but better than nothing. Making Lynn his head-quarters, Lee sallied forth in all directions, not overlooking Boston.)

Extemporaneous preaching, like every thing else that pertained to Methodism, was misunderstood. It was represented not as preaching without reading, but preaching without preparation. It pleased the people, but was a novelty and a stumbling-block to the parsons. One of them consented that Lee might preach in his church on condition that he should select the text and present it after Lee had entered the pulpit. To this he agreed. The matter was noised through the village, and the house was crowded to witness the discomfiture of the new-comer. The introductory services over, the minister handed Lee the text. It was Numbers xxii. 21: "And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass." The parson composed himself in his seat with a look of grim satisfaction. Being well acquainted with the story of Balaam, Lee proceeded at once to describe his character, descanting largely on his avarice and love of the wages of unrighteousness, denouncing in severe language the baseness of the man who could use the prophetic office as a means of gain, and could endanger the very souls of the people of Israel, for the sake of the wages which Balak offered. He then proceeded to describe the oppressed, enslaved, and pitiable condition of the ass; spoke affectingly of the patience of the creature under burdens, and spurs, and whippings, and abuses; said the ass usually endured without complaining at the abuse heaped on him. Indeed, except the one in the history of Balaam, there had never been an instance of an ass speaking and expostulating under ill treatment. He alluded to the saddle, and described how galling it might become, especially under the weight of a large, fat, heavy man. At this point he cast a knowing look at the minister, a corpulent person. Having gone through with an exposition of the subject, he proceeded to the application. He said the idea might be new to them—it had never struck him till the text was given him; but he thought Balaam might be considered a type and representative of their minister. Balaam's ass, in many respects, reminded him of themselves, the congregation of that town; and the saddle

bound on the poor ass, by cords and girths, evidently represented the minister's salary fastened on them by taxation. Its galling and oppressive influence they had often felt; in some instances, as he had been informed, the last and only cow of a poor man with a large family had been taken and sold to pay for the salary of the well-fed incumbent of the saddle.

After this specimen of his skill in extempore sermons, the demand for the article from that quarter ceased.

He could tell where the preachers of the standing order abused him most, by the size of his congregations; for, in spite of their prejudices, the traditional curiosity of the people brought them out to see and hear the much-abused "itinerant peddler" of pernicious dogmas. Abuse him they did, frequently, and warn the people against being partakers of his "damnable heresies." Now and then a deacon superior to the rest opened his house for the itinerant, for which, says Lee, he would be "much buffeted."

Such treatment could not damp the ardor of the evangelist. Upon a chilling reception he exclaims: "I bless God that he keeps my spirits up under all my discouragements! If the Lord did not comfort me in hoping against hope, or believing against appearances, I should depart from the work in this part of the world; but I still wait to see the salvation of the Lord."

Lee and his fellow-laborers extended their travels in many directions, so that five circuits were mapped out on the Minutes in the following year. Nearly two hundred souls had been united in classes—a large number, if we consider the obstacles which obstructed every movement of the few laborers in the field. Two chapels had been begun and were in condition to be used. At Conference (New York) Lee had a protracted interview with Bishop Asbury, who not only promised him more help but a visit next summer. Accordingly, in 1791, we find him for the first time on a tour through New England. On the 9th of June he arrived at New Haven, the famous seat of learning, and his appointment to preach having been published in the newspapers, he had the honor of the President of Yale College, some of the faculty and students, and a few prominent citizens, to hear him. They all listened respectfully, but their coolness, as compared with the warm hospitality to which he had been accustomed on his episcopal journeys in the Middle and Southern States, led him to make the following entry in his journal:



I talked away to them very fast. When I had done no man spoke to me. I thought to-day of dear Mr. Whitefield's words to Mr. Boardman and Mr. Pilmoor at their first coming over to America: "Ah!" said he, "if ye were Calvinists, ye would take the country before ye." We visited the college chapel at the hour of prayer; I wished to go through the whole, to inspect the interior arrangements, but no one invited me. The divines were grave, and the students were attentive; they used me like a fellow-Christian in coming to hear me preach, and like a stranger in other respects. Should Cokesbury or Baltimore ever furnish the opportunity, I in my turn will requite their behavior by treating them as friends, brothers, and gentlemen. The difficulty I met with in New Haven for lodging and for a place to hold meeting made me feel and know the worth of Methodists more than ever."

The first conference in New England was held in Lynn, August, 1792. Eight preachers were present besides Asbury. Of course Jesse Lee rejoices at the progress. Hope Hull has come up from Georgia to help him.

Boston yielded at last. Lee records the date: "On the 13th day of July, 1792, we joined a few in Society, and after a short time they began to increase in numbers. We met with uncommon difficulties here from the beginning, for the want of a convenient house to preach in. We began in private houses, and could seldom keep possession of them long. The Society then undertook to get them a meeting-house, but being poor, and but few in number, they could do but little." Three years later the corner-stone of their first chapel was laid.

Having established Societies at Middletown and Hartford, Boston and Lynn, and the surrounding country, Lee pushed next his outposts over into the Province of Maine, then a part of Massachusetts, consisting chiefly of dense forests, with a narrow fringe of settlements along the sea-coast and a few towns on the rivers in the interior. Providing himself with two good horses, which he tired out by turns, he explored this new country in all directions, and organized a circuit west of the Kennebec River, which he called Readfield, where the first conference in the Province of Maine was held in 1798. In this distant field he had among his hearers a rustic lad who was destined to be heard from in the history and development of Methodism.

Joshua Soule was born in Bristol, Maine, August 1, 1781, the fifth son of Joshua Soule, who was the eldest son of Joseph Soule, a descendant of George Soule, one of the Pilgrim Fathers who came over in the Mayflower. His father was captain of a mer-

chant vessel, and would have continued in a sea-faring life but for the loss of his vessels during the Revolutionary War. After this he devoted himself to the pursuit of agriculture, removing to Avon, a new settlement on the Sandy River, while Joshua was an infant in his mother's arms. He remarked to a friend: "They say I was born in the State of Maine; but I was a presiding elder before Maine was erected into a State. I was born in the State of Massachusetts—province, or district, of Maine."\*

His parents were rigid Calvinists. Joshua feared the Lord from his youth. Among his playmates and school-fellows he was called "the deacon." He never knew when he could not read. He read the Bible much, which kept alive those awakenings of which he never knew the beginning. Jesse Lee, in 1793, preached in his father's neighborhood and formed the first circuit in those parts, extending from Hallowell to Sandy River. There being no meeting-house of the people called Methodists then, a private house, about a mile and a half from the Soule residence, was both the preacher's home and chapel.

There Joshua attended, and heard Jesse Lee—the first Methodist preacher he ever saw or heard—Thomas Cope, Philip Wagger, and their successors, and found that he could assent to the view of the gospel which they presented. His mind had revolted at Calvinism. The opposite doctrine and its experience suited him "sentimentally." He found it in his intuitions, drew it from the Bible, and had met with it in books.

One morning, before sunrise, he awoke and as usual went out to pray. For the first time, the witness of the Spirit was vouchsafed to him. The sun rose on his joy. A new heaven and a new earth smiled around. The peace that passeth all understanding overflowed his soul.

He was minded to join the Church, and inclination and duty drew him to the Methodists. As a dutiful son—in his sixteenth year—he consulted his parents. His father was mortified, and tried to dissuade him from ever going among those people again. As for his mother, she wept sore and remonstrated, declaring that if he took that step she regarded her son as ruined—she wished he had never heard of a Methodist.

Without acting hastily, he reviewed the matter, but abode in the same conclusion. Duty seemed to be clear, though the way

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\*Funeral-services in *Christian Advocate* (Nashville), March 14, 1867.

was painful. His own account is: "Before taking the final step, I had my father and mother apart, and laid the whole matter before them. With much respect, and many tears, I told them my convictions; and besides, requested them to name a single instance in which I had ever disobeyed them. But now I felt it my solemn duty to unite with the Methodist Church, and to gain their consent and approval would afford me more happiness than any thing else in the world."

His father's mortification grew toward indignation at the firm proposal; and as for his mother, she pleaded with him in tears, and used every entreaty to turn him aside. "It cost me something," he continued, "to be a Methodist—I became one fully expecting to be an exile from my father's house. Twice in my life have I been brought to a stand. Twice have my faith and resolution been put to the test—but I decided in both cases in the fear of God, and with reference to my accountability at his bar."

His heart was fixed and the step was taken, and contrary to expectation his parents ceased to oppose him; but he went alone to his meetings. Scarcely any thing was ever said about them. He joined the Church at one of the week-day meetings, to the joy and surprise of the neighbors.

One day, as the plow-teams were resting at a turning-place, his father passing near him, Joshua said: "Father, a distinguished man is to preach this afternoon. Will you go and hear him?" The father answered: "No, I have heard one or two of them; they are all alike—enthusiasts, and don't know how to preach." The son replied with deference, "Does your law judge a man before it hears him?" To which there was no answer. But evidently the old Captain was put to thinking. He was a man of decision, and had taught his children to be so too—but first, to be right. The noon hour, the unhitching and feeding time, came. After dinner, quite to Joshua's surprise, his father ordered two horses to be saddled, and went with his Methodist boy to the Methodist meeting.

Cyrus Stebbins, the preacher, excelled himself that day. Great as were the issues pending, and the solicitude felt by one of his hearers, at least, the preacher rose equal to the occasion. His text was the vision of dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii. 10). The elder Soule was all attention. There was power in the word. Preaching over, and the congregation dismissed, Joshua asked his fa-



ther if he would allow him to introduce him to the minister. He not only assented, but, to Joshua's equal astonishment and delight, asked the preacher to go home with him; and the invitation was accepted.

"Knowing my father's prejudices," he says, "I had my fears. He was a thoughtful man, and had read much in theology, and he considered the argument for Calvinism unanswerable. Already I saw a controversy in store; so I made it convenient to drop behind as the company rode along, and have a word with the preacher, putting him on his guard as to what was required and expected of him."

Supper over, the debate began in earnest, and Joshua was not an inattentive listener. It was prolonged till one o'clock next morning. He trembled for Stebbins once or twice, but the "circuit rider," well up in "Fletcher's Checks," brought forth truth unto victory. "With pleasure I saw my father hemmed in; he could go no farther. He was a candid man, and confessed himself foiled."

Prayer had been offered evening and morning, and as the preacher was taking leave, the solitary young Methodist could hardly believe his own ears when he heard his father invite him to make his house a stopping-place, and as it was larger than the one where meetings had heretofore been held, to move the circuit-preaching to his house! It was done. The notice was given, and the next appointment was a crowded one. Stebbins again had unction from on high and was equal to the occasion. All the neighbors were there, among them two or three Baptist preachers, and it was a day of the Son of man.

In less than six months after Joshua had joined the Methodists, his father and mother, and two older brothers, and two sisters, were numbered with them. His father was an official member till the day of his death.

So early did he begin to show qualities that made him a leader among men, a veritable *Joshua*, a captain of the Lord's host.

His call to preach was not attended by that conflict which is so common. He believed in a call to the ministry, by the Spirit. His account was brief: "The Lord called me to preach, and I went." June, 1799, he was admitted into the traveling connection, and appointed to Portland Circuit, in Maine. In 1804 he was presiding elder of the district, which embraced the

whole territory of the present State. He filled this office two years; and so successful was the Church during this period that in 1806 a new district was formed called Kennebec. On this district he was employed in 1806 and 1807. The succeeding four years were spent on the Portland District.

This brings him into the broader field and service of the entire Connection. He comes forward—a figure and an influence not to be lost sight of for the next half century. No grander man, or more exemplary Christian, or more useful bishop, has appeared in Methodism. His majestic form and bearing, and his finely chiseled features, with expression in every line, could not fail to arrest attention and command deference from civilized or savage men, who saw

The elements  
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, "This is a man!"

Perhaps no one was ever more thoroughly attached to the Wesleyan system of doctrine and discipline than Joshua Soule. He loved Methodism because of its scriptural character, its aggressive power, and its diffusive spirit. He loved its simple theology, its sublime psalmody, its decent forms—for which, indeed, he was somewhat of a stickler—and its elevated standard of experimental and practical piety. His own personal religious character was formed upon it. And when he drew near his end, he rejoiced in the belief that it was renewing its youth, and going forth afresh like a strong man to run a race.

The history of American Methodism cannot be written, even by unfriendly partisans, without making honorable mention of his name, or leaving a wide gap that cannot be filled; for in addition to his power as a gospel preacher, he possessed the "plain, heroic magnitude of mind," which shows its preëminence chiefly in affairs. He died in Nashville, March 6, 1867. His junior colleague, who closed his eyes, gives an account of the last hours of this eventful life:

There were no transports; but quietness and assurance and tranquillity marked the final hours. There were no fears, no gloomy uncertainties, no trepidations. He knew in whom he had believed. He had committed the keeping of soul and body to One who is faithful, and there he rested.

A little before midnight: "Bishop, is all clear before you?" Softly he answered, "Yes, yes." "Do you understand me, Bishop?" "I do, sir."

About one o'clock he seemed to be passing under the cloud and disappearing; I said, "Is all right, still?" Then for the last time did he throw that peculiar emphasis upon his words, "All right, sir; all right."

At intervals we gave him water, which he swallowed with an appearance of thirst. Soon after drinking it, about two o'clock, when his voice, though feeble, was distinct, seeing him cross his hands on his breast, I asked, "Are you praying?" He replied, "Not now," and never spake more.

I was surprised at these words; they were not what I expected, for I knew he understood me and meant what he said. But as I looked on him lying there, and thought on the words "not now," they began to appear right, very right. His work was done; the night had come when no man can work. The servant who has loitered away the day begins to be very busy when the shadows lengthen. There is such a thing as having nothing to do but to die. Woe to the man who has his praying to do and his dying at the same time! He that believeth shall not make haste. Not praying now; that was done with, and the time for praising would soon set in. Like a ship, brave and stanch, that has weathered the storms and buffeted the waves, the voyage is ended; it nears the land, the busy wheels cease their revolutions, and under the headway and momentum already acquired, it glides to the anchorage.

Vermont furnished a Methodist not so forceful in character, or so lofty in leadership, as Joshua Soule, but of finer fiber and gentler mold—Wilbur Fisk. As a well-poised and well-rounded man, great in all good directions, his superior has not been seen in the pulpits and councils of the Church. Every soul, while in the body, must be born and live in some section, and to that extent is sectional; but Wilbur Fisk's altitude and breadth enabled him to see both sides of every question, and to take in both parties of every discussion, that concerned Methodism, in his day. He lived for many years in the enjoyment of "perfect love;" exemplifying a Wesleyan doctrine in experience, while with the pen of Fletcher he fought the doctrinal battles with a new type of Calvinism and Universalism which Lee had left for his learned successors to finish up. More than any other man, he quickened and shaped his Church in the direction of higher Christian education; and if Asbury never enjoyed at Cokesbury his sweet and lawful revenge on the New Haven professors, he might have had it at Middletown, under Wilbur Fisk. He died in 1838; and it is hard to realize that a man of feeble health should have done such a work and acquired such a just fame, living but forty-six years.

Hard work and poor pay was the rule of itinerant life in the West; and the planting of Methodism in the East formed no exception. Take a page from the experience of Elijah Hedding.



who though not a native New Englander became one by adoption, the year Lee invaded that region. His awakening began at an after-sermon class-meeting, old style, held by Benjamin Abbott, under whose ministry his mother had been brought into the Church. Having gone round the class, Abbott approached the nine-year-old boy: "Well, do you think you are a sinner?" "Yes, sir." Then with a pretty heavy emphasis the preacher concluded: "There's many a boy in hell not as old as you are." This frightened him, and as Elijah Hedding testifies, "produced real religious concern, as I doubt not it was accompanied by the operation of God's Spirit?" At fifteen, being a good reader, he read one of Wesley's sermons, at the prayer-meetings. At eighteen, during a religious meeting, he "received religious comfort," and gave his name as a probationer; "not having a clear consciousness of his acceptance and conversion." He adds: "About six weeks after this, while conversing with a brother about the witness of the Spirit, the light of the Spirit broke in upon my mind as clear and perceptible as the sun when it comes from behind a cloud, testifying that I was born of God; and it was done at the time before named, when my guilt was removed and I found peace in believing." At nineteen, though only an exhorter, he began his ministry by supplying a circuit which Lorenzo Dow had left to go "ranging;" for among the fruits of Lee's ministry in Connecticut, was that unique character.

Elijah Hedding endured hardness the first ten years of his circuit-riding. Reviewing these years he says:

I have averaged over three thousand miles' travel a year, and preached, on an average, a sermon a day, since I commenced the itinerant life. During that period I have traveled circuits that joined each other, through a tract of country beginning near Troy, New York, and going north into Canada; thence east through Vermont and New Hampshire; and thence southerly, through Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, to Long Island Sound. I have never in this time owned a traveling vehicle, but have ridden on horseback, except occasionally in winter when I have borrowed a sleigh, and also in a few instances when I have traveled by public conveyance or in a borrowed carriage. I have both labored hard and fared hard. Much of the time I have done missionary work without missionary money. Until recently I have had no dwelling-place or home, but as a wayfaring man lodged from night to night where hospitality and friendship opened the way. In most of these regions the Methodists were few and comparatively poor. I was often obliged to depend on poor people for food and lodging and horse-keeping; and though in general they provided for me cheerfully and willingly, yet I often felt that I was taking what they needed for their children,

and that my horse was eating what they needed for their own beasts. I often suffered great trials of mind on this account, and have traveled many a day without dinner, because I had not a quarter of a dollar that I could spare to buy it.

His average pay was about forty-five dollars a year; and one year he received, exclusive of traveling expenses, three dollars and twenty-five cents! The first year he was on the New Hampshire District (1807) he received four dollars and twenty-five cents! He says: "My pantaloons were often patched upon the knees, and the sisters showed their kindness by turning an old coat for me!" Authentic reports from the preachers of the New England Conference, from 1800 to 1805, show that the annual receipts of each of them did not average seventy dollars, including all presents, and that the aggregate sum paid to all of them, numbering about twenty-five, in each of these years, was less than the amount now received by one minister stationed in some of the Methodist churches in cities, where Jesse Lee effected a grudging entrance, as a man drives a wedge into a hard log.\*

In June, 1810, the Rev. Henry Boehm, accompanying the Bishop, attended a session of the New England Conference:

There was a camp-meeting held in connection with it, about three miles distant, and they had preaching there three times a day during its session. On Sunday, the 10th, Bishop Asbury preached with life and energy; after which six deacons and twelve elders were ordained. There were about fifteen hundred persons present. Six sermons were preached that day.

On Monday morning, after the bishops, Asbury and McKendree, had delivered their valedictory addresses, which were distinguished for appropriateness and pathos, Bishop Asbury read off the appointments for eighty-seven preachers, who all went cheerfully to their work in the spirit of their Master.

On the 16th, Bishop Asbury, George Pickering, and myself went to Boston, and were the guests of Elijah Sabin, the stationed preacher. The new chapel was greatly in debt, and Brother Pickering had been South soliciting funds; and yet such were the pressing wants of the Church that Bishop Asbury wrote five letters supplicating a collection for the new chapel—namely, to Baltimore, Georgetown, Alexandria, Norfolk, and Charleston; and I believe they all responded.

In 1832 the presiding elder of the New Haven District wrote that its territory was then almost entirely included in Lee's second circuit, organized in 1789 and compassed by the itinerant every two weeks. It contained fifteen circuits and stations, employed thirty-four traveling preachers, had between thirty and forty local preachers, six thousand members, and fifty chapels.†

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\*American Methodism, by Rev. M. L. Scudder, D.D. † Letter of Rev. Heman Bangs, quoted in Stevens's History of the M. E. Church.

Having spent eight years in New England, he takes a wider field. The Minutes for 1797, 1798, and 1799 say: "Jesse Lee, travels with Bishop Asbury." This brought him, in the Bishop's absence on account of sickness, to preside in the Conference of 1797, at Wilbraham. He loved to visit it. In 1808 he found six districts, presided over by such men as John Broadhead, Elijah R. Sabin, Thomas Branch, Elijah Hedding, Joshua Soule, and Oliver Beale. He also found eight thousand eight hundred and sixty-one members. Martin Ruter was stationed at Boston with over three hundred and forty members, all of whom received him as their father. He passed on to Lynn, to be greeted by Dan Young, the pastor, and one hundred and seventy members. A crowd attended him everywhere, so that the churches could not accommodate them. He spent forty-three days in Maine, and preached forty-seven sermons. Hurrying to New Hampshire, he preached seven farewell sermons in less than a week, and about the same number in less time in Connecticut.

Though so unwelcome, Methodism was nowhere more needed than in New England. The reaction from high Calvinism to Unitarianism and Rationalism was going on at its advent, and the evil was modified by its influence. Effete and dead forms of worship received an infusion of new life. Into a region of great mental activity an element entered restraining and sanctifying, which, though not acknowledged by the self-satisfied philosophers, has nevertheless been felt. A party, not small in numbers or influence, had arisen, contending that if a man were educated for it the lack of conversion was no bar to his entrance upon the ministry. Whitefield numbered over twenty ministers converted under his preaching. If sharp assailants of the faith have issued from New England, so have strong defenders.

In 1809 Lee was chosen chaplain to Congress, an office which he held until 1815, and then resigned. His death occurred in September, 1816, at the age of fifty-eight; and his grave, in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Baltimore, was honored with an elegant shaft of Scotch granite, erected by the second generation of his spiritual children in Boston.

[The materials for this Chapter are furnished by the Histories of Jesse Lee, Bangs, Stevens, Porter, Daniels, Scudder; The Life and Times of Jesse Lee, by L. M. Lee, D.D.; and Asbury's Journal.]



## CHAPTER XXXI.

The Valley of the Mississippi: Occupying it—Gate-way to the North-west and the South-west—Indian Troubles—Asbury Crossing the Wilderness—Bethel Academy—Kentucky—Tennessee—Three Local Preachers Shaping Ohio—Missionaries—McHenry, Burke, Wilkerson, Page, Tobias Gibson, Valentine Cook.

THE occupancy of the Valley of the Mississippi by the gospel was the great problem for the American Church. The wave of revival that rolled back from the West to the East, at the close of the last century, was evidence of the extent of the movement and of the divine forces at work there.

Besides the vices naturally engendered in the rapid settlement of a new country, where the hope of wealth is excited by rich lands, and the revengeful passions are stirred by a sense of danger from a lingering but weakening foe, the West had to encounter the peril of a bold infidelity. The French Revolution was popular. The American people remembered France as their late ally, and regarded her as a sister republic contending for freedom against banded despots. "The terrible energy which the French Republic displayed against such fearful odds, the haughty crest with which she confronted her enemies, and repelled them from her frontier at every point, presented a spectacle well calculated to dazzle the friends of democracy throughout the world." France had embraced infidelity. The Bible there had been repudiated, and death declared to be "an eternal sleep;" and atheism was openly professed among all classes of society. The moral effect of all this was felt in the hunting-camps and in the log-cabins of Kentucky and Tennessee. The writings of Paine, Voltaire, and such like, intended to sap the foundations of Christianity, were sown broadcast through the land. Not only did their sentiments find favor with the masses of the people, but many, holding high positions of public trust, and belonging to the more influential walks of life, imbibed these doctrines, and openly avowed their disbelief in the word of God.

While the leaven of infidelity was working, the testimony of a competent witness, who was reared amid the vigorous scenes of this Western life, shows why Methodism had a special call to counteract it: "To add to the darkness of the moral horizon,

most of the Churches had sunk into mere formality, so that the doctrine of the new birth—implying that radical change of heart which brings with it the evidence of pardon and adoption—was quite ignored or totally repudiated. The dogmas of election and reprobation, predestination and decrees, were the themes of the pulpit; and they rather confirmed than weakened the popular disposition to reject revelation. The masses considered such doctrines a slander upon God's justice, as well as upon his goodness, and concluded that if the Bible afforded such views of Jehovah it could not be true.\*

Francis Clark, a local preacher, was the pioneer of Methodism in Kentucky. As early as 1783, accompanied by John Durham, a class-leader, and others of his neighbors, he left Virginia, and settled in Mercer county, and organized a class, the first in the far West, about six miles from Danville. "He was a man," says a chronicler of the time, "of sound judgment, and well instructed in the doctrines of the Church. As a preacher he was successful in forming several societies, and lived many years to rejoice in the success of the cause that he had been the instrument, under God, of commencing in the wilderness. He died at his own home, the last year of the century, in great peace, and in hope of a blessed immortality." William J. Thompson also emigrated at an early day from North Carolina, and settled in the same neighborhood. A useful local preacher, he afterward joined the traveling connection in the Western Conference; and moving to the State of Ohio, became connected with the Ohio Conference, where his labors and usefulness are held in remembrance by many. Other local preachers and faithful laymen came and settled in Jessamine and Fayette and Nelson counties.†

The first itinerants sent out in 1786, Haw and Ogden, were re-enforced by transfers as needed. Peter Massie was converted and brought into the ministry by the missionaries. He was styled "the weeping prophet." One who knew him well, says: "I heard him preach the gospel frequently, and I do not think I ever heard him but when tears rolled down his manly cheeks, while he warned the people to flee from the wrath to come."

In 1787 Kentucky District was divided into two circuits, one of which still bore the name of Kentucky. James Haw was re-

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\* Rev. Jonathan Stamper, in *Home Circle*, Vol. I. † Redford's *History of Methodism in Kentucky*.

turned as elder. Thomas Williamson and Wilson Lee were appointed to one circuit; the other was called Cumberland, to which Benjamin Ogden was appointed. The Cumberland Circuit embraced the country now known as Middle Tennessee, and a small portion of Southern Kentucky. The Kentucky Circuit included the whole of the District of Kentucky, except that part embraced in the Cumberland. Francis Poythress, in 1788, superseded Haw, and was henceforth in charge of the district until his overworked body and mind gave way.

The hard Church laws of Virginia had massed the Baptists and Presbyterians west of the Blue Ridge, where they were comparatively free from exactions and persecutions. They were ready to pour over into Kentucky, so soon as that fertile territory was opened, and to occupy it. Rev. David Rice immigrated to Kentucky from Virginia in 1783, and settled in Mercer county. Previous to this date small bodies of Presbyterians had settled in the neighborhoods of Danville and Cane Run, and in 1786 the Presbytery of Transylvania was organized.

As early as 1776 the Rev. William Hickman came from Virginia on a tour of observation, and devoted much of his time to preaching the gospel. He was perhaps the first preacher of any denomination to lift the standard of the cross on "the dark and bloody ground." Other Baptist ministers soon followed him, and the Baptist Church was organized in 1781, near Lancaster. One of the first governors of the State was a Baptist minister—Garrard.

In the spring of 1790, Bishop Asbury extended his travels to Kentucky, when, for the first time, an Annual Conference was held there. He was accompanied by Richard Whatcoat and Hope Hull. The Conference commenced 15th of May, at Masterson's Station, five miles north-west of Lexington, where the first Methodist church in Kentucky—a plain log structure—was erected. Two years before, Asbury had crossed the mountains to meet a Conference in the Holston Valley; now, he must cross a wilderness beyond that. The first trip involved labor and fatigue; the last, these and more. April 6th, he says: "I received a faithful letter from Brother Poythress in Kentucky, encouraging me to come. Now it is we must prepare for danger in going through the wilderness." Resting at General Russell's, and recruiting; preaching in the Nollichucky and Clinch and Holston valleys, which seem now to become a starting-point, he waits for



an escort that is to guide and protect evangelists on the journey: "May 3.—Sabbath night I dreamed the guard from Kentucky came for me; and mentioned it to Brother Whatcoat. In the morning I retired to a small stream for meditation and prayer, and whilst there saw two men come over the hills; I felt a presumption that they were Kentucky men, and so they proved to be; they were Peter Massie and John Clark, who were coming for me, with the intelligence that they had left eight men below; after reading the letters, and asking counsel of God, I consented to go with them."

The company, mustering sixteen men with thirteen guns, "moved on very swiftly, considering the roughness of the way." On the seventh day of their journey, they reached Richmond, the county-seat of Madison county, and three days afterward, Lexington. The Bishop says: "I was strangely outdone for want of sleep, having been greatly deprived of it in my journey through the wilderness—which is like being at sea in some respects, and in others worse. Our way is over mountains, steep hills, deep rivers, and muddy creeks—a thick growth of reeds for miles together, and no inhabitants but wild beasts and savage men. I slept about an hour the first night, and about two the last. We ate no regular meals; our bread grew short, and I was much spent."

On the road-side they saw the graves of twenty-four travelers who, a short time before, had been massacred by the Indians. We quote from the Bishop's journal:

May 13.—Being court time, I preached in a dwelling-house at Lexington, and not without some feeling. The Methodists do but little here—others lead the way. Our Conference was held at Brother Masterson's, a very comfortable house, and kind people. We went through our business in great love and harmony. I ordained Wilson Lee, Thomas Williamson, and Barnabas McHenry, elders. We had preaching noon and night, and souls were converted, and the fallen restored. My soul has been blessed among these people, and I am exceedingly pleased with them. I would not, for the worth of all the place, have been prevented in this visit, having no doubt but that it will be for the good of the present and rising generation. It is true, such exertions of mind and body are trying; but I am supported under it—if souls are saved, it is enough. Brother Poythress is much alive to God. We fixed a plan for a school, and called it Bethel; and obtained a subscription of upward of £300, in land and money, toward its establishment.

A new name is here introduced, and one identified with Western Methodism. Referring to the early ministers who opened and subdued the wilderness, the late Bishop Bascom said: "They

labored, suffered, triumphed, in obscurity and want. No admiring populace to cheer them on; no feverish community gazetted them into fame. Principle alone sustained them, and their glory was that of action." In his commanding personal appearance and influence, in the order of his talents, and the grace and power that accompanied his ministry, Barnabas McHenry was eminent. He was born in North Carolina, 1767. In the twentieth year of his age he entered on his itinerant career. His first appointment was to the Yadkin Circuit. He spent the following year in Kentucky, and after efficient, self-denying toil, on circuits and districts, died of cholera in 1833. The venerable Jacob Young's autobiography, describing an occasion, says: "The most distinguished man I met was B. McHenry. He was a man by himself." Dr. Bascom published a monograph of this man who did much to stimulate and direct his own mind. He describes his preaching as mainly expository and didactic:

The whole style of his preaching denoted the confidence of history and experience. All seemed to be real and personal to him. The perfect simplicity, and yet clear, discriminating accuracy of his manner and language made the impression that he was speaking only of what he knew to be true. He spoke of every thing as of a natural scene before him. There was an intensity of conception, a sustained sentiment of personal interest, which gave one a feeling of wonder and awe in listening to him. You could not doubt his right to guide and teach. One felt how safe and proper it was to follow such leading. His style was exceedingly rich without being showy. There was no effervescence. It was not the garden and landscape in bloom, but in early bud, giving quiet but sure indication of fruit and foliage. His language was always accurate, well chosen, strong, and clear. All his sermons, as delivered, were in this respect fit for the press—not only remarkably free from error on the score of thought, but from defect and fault of style and language. His whole manner, too, was natural, dignified, and becoming. Good taste and sound judgment were his main mental characteristics. Of imagination proper he had but little, and still less of fancy. Reason, fitness, and beauty were the perceptions by which he was influenced. The intrinsic value of things alone attracted him. The outward show of things made little or no impression upon him, under any circumstances. The inner man—the hidden things of the heart—controlled him in all his judgments and preferences.\*

In the bend of Kentucky River, Mr. Lewis, an old Leesburg acquaintance, welcomed the Bishop, and offered one hundred acres of land for the site of Bethel College.

"Had a noble shout at Brown's—four souls converted," says his journal. "Reached the Crab Orchard, and lodged under a

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\* Editorial in the *Southern Methodist Quarterly Review*, Vol. III.

tree" preparatory to recrossing the wilderness; "had about fifty people in the company—twenty were armed, and five might have stood fire." They make for Cumberland Gap:

To preserve order and harmony, we had articles drawn up for and signed by our company, and I arranged the people for traveling according to the regulations agreed upon. The first night we lodged some miles beyond the Hazelpatch. The next day we discovered signs of Indians, and some thought they heard voices; we therefore thought it best to travel on, and did not encamp until three o'clock, halting on the east side of Cumberland River. We had an alarm, but it turned out to be a false alarm. Brother Massie was captain; and finding I had gained authority among the people, I acted somewhat in the capacity of an adjutant and quartermaster amongst them. At the foot of the mountain the company separated; the greater part went on with me to Powell's River.

May 28-30 were spent at General Russell's, "whose wife is converted since I left the house last. I thought then," he adds, "that she was not far from the kingdom of God."

The last day of the month, passing through New River Circuit, Asbury gets a last view of that noble itinerant who has in fourteen years preached the gospel in eight out of thirteen States—John Tunnell. He is dying of consumption; "a mere shadow, but very humble and patient under his affliction." "June 1.—I rode about forty-five miles to Armstrong's, and next day about four o'clock reached McKnight's on the Yadkin River, in North Carolina; here the Conference had been waiting for me nearly two weeks; we rejoiced together, and my brethren received me as one brought from the jaws of death."

Let us leave the field on the Atlantic slope, now everywhere being cultivated or laid off for cultivation, and return to the Kentucky District—destined to be the distributing point of laborers for the North-west and the South-west.

Mountain ranges did not determine the course and order of the westward movement, but Indian tribes. The Church has been planted in Georgia, and the Mississippi Territory forms the western boundary of Georgia; but the gospel will be carried to Mississippi first by way of Tennessee and down the great river; because the Creek or Muskogee Indians lie on the direct route below, and the Choctaws and Cherokees above. The North-western Territory will be approached by way of Kentucky, because the Miami and Shawnee Indians and confederate tribes north of the Ohio hold the country down to the river bank, and make the water passage dangerous. Though surrounded on three sides by



Indian tribes, Kentucky was never claimed or occupied by any tribe. It was a common hunting-ground, and on account of frequent hostile collisions was called the "Dark and Bloody Ground." Warlike incursions were often made across the frontiers; and through the intervening wilderness roving bands of Indians for a long time kept a path of communication between the tribes on the lower Holston and Tennessee rivers, and those dwelling on the Scioto and Miami. This path had to be crossed with more or less peril in going from the East to Kentucky. There were smaller campaigns, but in 1791 General St. Clair left Fort Washington, as the military post was called where Cincinnati now is, with an army of two thousand volunteers to subdue and break up the Miami Confederacy. A hundred miles north of his starting-point, while encamped on a tributary of the Wabash, he was surprised by the Indians, under their chief—Little Turtle—and after three hours desperate fighting half of his army was killed and the remnant barely escaped massacre. This terrible disaster threw a gloom over the whole West, and indeed over the entire country. President Washington, when the dispatches reached him, lost his usual equanimity and exclaimed: "Here, in this very room, I took leave of General St. Clair, wishing him success and honor! I said to him: 'You have careful instructions from the Secretary of War, and I myself will add one word, *Beware of a surprise.* You know how the Indians fight—*beware of a surprise.*' He went off with that, my last warning, ringing in his ears; and yet he has suffered that army to be butchered, tomahawked, by a surprise. How can he answer to his country?"

In 1794 General Wayne, called "Mad Anthony," after ineffectual efforts for peace, led an army of three thousand into the same field, and defeated the Miamis, and broke up their confederacy; obtained a cession from the chiefs of the present State of Ohio; pressed them back into the vast Indiana Territory, with Vincennes as Government head-quarters, and exacted other terms that gave a general peace. At a later date, General Jackson broke the power of the hostile Indian tribes in the South. Thenceforth, under the protection of treaties and agencies, emigrants passed through the land, not always without danger; and where the emigrant went, the itinerant preacher followed.

Virginia having relinquished her claim to its territory, Kentucky was admitted into the Union as a State in 1792, with

seventy-three thousand inhabitants. North Carolina having relinquished her claim to its territory, Tennessee was admitted in 1796; six years before, the population was thirty-five thousand, but it was soon doubled.

Now the movement to the North-west began. Notwithstanding the additions during several years by revivals and immigrations, the Kentucky District, though served by an able and faithful ministry, hardly held its own. In some places, societies were entirely broken up, and in others, only portions were left, by removals from the State. Large bodies of Methodists from Kentucky settled in what is now the State of Ohio, in the Mad River country, and on the Big and Little Miamis; so that, notwithstanding the success that crowned the labors of the preachers, in their annual exhibits they often showed a decrease of membership in their fields of labor.

The names of Henry Birchett, David Haggard, Samuel Tucker, and Joseph Lillard, appear on the roll in this department of the work, for the first time, among the appointments made by Bishop Asbury on his present visit to the Kentucky District.\* Joseph Lillard was a Kentuckian by birth; born near Harrodsburg.

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\* Francis Poythress, Elder; Danville—Thomas Williamson, Stephen Brooks; Cumberland—Wilson Lee, James Haw, Peter Massie; Madison—Barnabas McHenry, Benjamin Snelling; Limestone—Samuel Tucker, Joseph Lillard; Lexington—Henry Birchett, David Haggard.

Cumberland Circuit lay chiefly in Tennessee. It extended, however, into Kentucky, and embraced, besides Middle Tennessee, what is now known as Logan, Warren, and Simpson counties. B. McHenry, who preached in it next year (1791), says: "The circuit was a four-weeks' circuit. Clarksville, near the mouth of Red River, was the lower extremity of the circuit, and of the settlement. Sumner Court-house was a cabin near Station Camp Creek. The upper end of the circuit was the eastern extremity of the settlement near Bledsoe's Lick. The population for some miles down consisted of a narrow string between the river and the ridge. Indeed, there was then no population on the south side of Cumberland River, Nashville and a very small part of the adjacent country excepted. There were four regular preaching-places on that side of the river. In the course of that year two class-leaders belonging to the circuit were killed. In some places the preachers could not retire to the woods or fields for the purpose of reading, meditation, and prayer, without probable danger of being shot or tomahawked. This was the more sensibly felt, as the houses in such places afforded little or no convenience for retirement. Our advantages consisted principally in peace and love. My helper on Cumberland Circuit, Brother O'Cull, labored with great zeal till some time in the fall of 1791, when he broke himself down so entirely that he never recovered."

He was sent to the Limestone Circuit (Maysville), with Samuel Tucker. He traveled his second year on the Salt River Circuit, after which his name disappears from the Minutes, and he settled not far from the place of his birth, where he lived to a good age. In his local relation, by the sanctity of his life and by his devotion to the Church, Lillard was very useful. In his home the itinerant found a welcome, and his liberality contributed to the promotion of the cause. Samuel Tucker, his colleague, was, like Lillard, a new recruit. He reached the circuit only in time to find a grave. The parents of the late Edward Stevenson, D.D.—converts of Strawbridge—had floated down the Ohio River with a company of emigrants in time to welcome the first missionaries who came to Mason county, Kentucky. He describes the tragic fate of Samuel Tucker:

Widely different, however, was the fate of the next lot of boats that attempted the same dangerous passage. A little below the mouth of the Scioto, they were attacked by the Indians, in great numbers, from both sides of the river, as well as from their bark canoes in the stream itself. Two of the boats were soon overpowered, and an indiscriminate slaughter of men women and children ensued. The third and only remaining boat of the company was closely pursued for several hours. The most of the men were either killed or wounded, and the remaining force was not sufficient to manage the oars and successfully resist a direct assault from their blood-thirsty pursuers. The women came to the rescue from their places of protection. Some took the oars and others reloaded the guns, leaving the few fighting men who had been preserved from the balls of the enemy nothing to do but to watch the movements of the insidious foe and fire to the best advantage. The Indians at length began to haul off; the fire from the boat had become too constant and well-directed; and soon the last warlike craft disappeared on the distant waters, and the bullet-riven boat was left to float on without further molestation. Early the next day they landed at the "Point" [Maysville]. My father was among the first on board. The scene was inexpressibly horrible. The living, as well as the dead and dying, were literally covered with blood. Among the latter was Samuel Tucker. He had received a wound in his chest soon after the commencement of the attack; but, nothing daunted by the near and certain approach of death, he continued to fight on—loading and firing his own long rifle, until his fading vision shut out the enemy from his sight. He breathed his last, in submission to the Divine will, soon after the boat reached the landing, and was buried by my father and others amid the lofty forest-trees that then overhung, in primitive grandeur and sublimity, the beautiful bottom where now the tide of business and commerce rolls on unmindful of the past. The place of his interment is known to none now living.\*

Among the preachers admitted on trial with Wm. McKendree Virginia, in 1788, were Henry Birchett, Aquila Sugg, Valentine

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\* Itinerant Sketches in *Christian Advocate* (Nashville), Oct. 9, 1856.



Cook, and John McGee; all of whom, like himself, were in after years laborers in the West. Henry Birchett, after a few years on the Western frontiers, died in the work. The remains of this godly man, who fell in 1794, repose in an old grave-yard about three miles below Nashville. Some kind hand erected a simple tombstone, and inscribed it with his initials. His biography says of him—and it is among the earliest found in the Minutes: "He was a gracious, happy, useful man, who freely offered himself for four years' service on the dangerous stations of Kentucky and Cumberland. He was one among the worthies who freely left ease, safety, and prosperity, to seek after and suffer faithfully for souls. His meekness, love, labors, prayers, tears, sermons, and exhortations will not be soon forgotten."\*

Peter Massie's race was soon run. "A feeling, pathetic preacher; a good singer; and remarkable for his zeal," is the testimony of the veterans who survived him. Though stationed in Kentucky, he died in the bounds of the Cumberland Circuit, on which he traveled the previous year. On the 18th of December, 1791, he reached the house of Mr. Hodges, four miles west of Nashville. The family was in the fort for protection. The only person at the cabin, besides Mr. Hodges—who was sick—was a negro named Simeon, who had that evening escaped from the Indians. Simeon had become acquainted with the preacher the past year, and had been converted through his instrumentality. Massie was "an afflicted man," and on reaching the house of his friend, he complained of indisposition. Next morning in conversation it was said "that he would soon be well enough to travel, if he recovered so fast." To which he replied, "If I am not well enough to travel, I am happy enough to die."† These were his last words. In a few moments he fell from his seat, and suddenly expired. Nearly a half century later the Tennessee Conference appointed a committee to seek for his grave, no stone having marked it. The committee searched in vain. The grave was never found, but the grave-digger was:

After an ineffectual search for years, the hope of success was abandoned. Seven years later, the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass was preaching near Nashville, and in the close of his sermon referred with much feeling to the hope of meeting in heaven with Asbury, McKendree, and others who had passed over the flood. In the congregation sat an aged African, with tears coursing down his cheeks. He

\* Life and Times of Wm. McKendree, by Paine. † Rev. Learner Blackman's unpublished manuscript; quoted by Redford in *History of Methodism in Kentucky*.

too was deeply moved, and thinking of another, exclaimed, in a clear voice, "Yes, and Brother Massie!" and then, continuing his soliloquy, he added: "Yes, Simeon, with these hands, with no one to help, you dug his grave, and laid him away in the ground; but you will see him again, for he lives in heaven!" A member of the Tennessee Conference\* sat just in front of old Simeon, and heard what he said. After the services he took him aside, and inquired what he knew of the burial of Peter Massie. He replied that he was at Mr. Hodges's at the death of Mr. Massie; that Mr. Hodges himself was unable to assist in his burial; and that he had no plank of which to make a coffin; that he cut down an ash-tree and split it into slabs, and placed them in the grave which he had dug, and after depositing the body, placed a slab over it, and then filled the grave with earth. He believed he could find the spot where the remains of Massie lay, but he could not. When he buried him the whole country was a wilderness, but at the time he made the search for his grave civilization had changed its entire appearance.

Simeon was a native African, and stated to the late Bishop Paine that he belonged to the nobility of that country. When only a child he was brought to the United States. Under the preaching of Peter Massie, in 1790, he had been awakened and converted. For more than fifty years he lifted the standard of the cross among the colored people of Tennessee, and exerted an influence that was felt far and near. With the people of his own color he enjoyed a popularity that belonged to no other man in the community, and over them he exercised an authority for good. The purity of his life so won upon the affections and confidence of his master that in early manhood he emancipated him and gave him a small farm near Nashville, which was voluntarily returned in his last will and testament. The concern that he felt for the African race was not confined to those around him, but his sympathy extended to his countrymen in their native land.

In 1823 he called on Bishop McKendree, and presented to him, in forcible language, the wants and condition of his people in Africa, and urged the appointment of a missionary to that benighted land. The Bishop became deeply interested in the scheme, and decided to comply with his wishes. The Rev. Robert (since Bishop) Paine was then stationed at Franklin and Lebanon. He offered himself for the work, making only one condition—that Simeon should accompany him. To this Simeon readily consented; but the arrangement was defeated by the remonstrance of the Church against the removal of their preacher.†

In his personal appearance he was superior to all his race around him. Although a full-blooded African, his face would have commanded attention anywhere. With a high and well-formed forehead; with penetrating, searching eyes; with a countenance full of the expression of benevolence; and with a mind far above ordinary, he would have commanded respect in any community. Added to these a life unblemished by vice, developing every day the practical duties and virtues of Christianity, it is no wonder that he enjoyed the confidence of those among whom he lived.

In 1847, after a long and useful life, he was called from "labor to reward." While dying, a member of the Church was kneeling beside him, who said to him: "Father Simeon, what hope have you beyond the grave?" With his eyes swimming in death, he raised his right-hand, "Up, up, up!" He spoke no more.

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\* Rev. A. L. P. Green, D.D.; quoted in Redford's History. † I have these facts from Bishop Paine.—*Redford's History*.

Bishop Asbury's second visit to Kentucky (1792) was with "guards," McHenry and Burke probably leading them:

April 4.—This morning we swam the [upper Cumberland] river, and also the West Fork thereof. My little horse was ready to fail in the course of the day. I was steeped in the water up to the waist. About seven o'clock, with hard pushing, we reached the Crab Orchard. How much I have suffered in this journey is only known to God and myself. What added much to its disagreeableness, I was seized with a severe flux, which followed me eight days: for some time I kept up, but at last found myself under the necessity of taking to my bed.

April 10.—I endured as severe pain as perhaps I ever felt. I made use of small portions of rhubarb, and also obtained some good claret, of which I drank a bottle in three days, and was almost well, so that on Sunday following I preached a sermon an hour long. In the course of my affliction I have felt myself very low. I have had serious views of eternity, and was free from the fear of death.

April 23.—I rode to Bethel. I found it necessary to change the plan of the house, to make it more comfortable to the scholars in cold weather. I am too much in company, and hear so much about Indians, convention, treaty, killing, and scalping, that my attention is drawn more to these things than I could wish. I found it good to get alone in the woods and converse with God.

Bethel was a place for holding Conference, and for awhile there was hope of it as an educational center. The order of history may be anticipated a little concerning Bethel. It was located on a high bluff in a bend of Kentucky River, Jessamine county. Wm. Burke gives this account of it at a later day:

The design was to accommodate the students in the house with boarding, etc. The first and second stories were principally finished, and a spacious hall in the center. The building of this house rendered the pecuniary means of the preachers very uncertain, for they were continually employed in begging for Bethel. The people were very liberal, but they could not do more than they did. The country was new, and the unsettled state of the people, in consequence of the Indian wars and depredations, kept the country in a continual state of agitation. The Legislature at an early period made a donation of six thousand acres of land to Bethel Academy. The land was located in Christian county, south of Green River, and remained a long time unproductive, and while I continued a trustee, till 1804, it was rather a bill of expense than otherwise. In 1803 I was appointed by the Western Conference to attend the Legislature and obtain an act of incorporation. I performed that duty, and Bethel was incorporated, with all the powers and privileges of a literary institution. The Rev. Valentine Cook was the first that organized the academical department, and at first the prospect was flattering. A number of students were in attendance; but difficulties occurred which it would be needless to mention, as all the parties concerned have gone to give an account at a higher tribunal.

Valentine Cook was educated at Cokesbury. He did memorable service in Virginia and Western Pennsylvania, both as a



preacher and polemic—rather eccentric in manner, mighty in the Scriptures, and of more learning than any of his ministerial associates. He labored extensively and very successfully in planting Methodism in the West. His memory is a sweet savor throughout the wide region of his labors.

A capital mistake about this second Cokesbury—often repeated since—was its location. The attempt to get away from temptation took the projectors into the woods. The hermit ideal is as impracticable for schools as for persons. And they were betrayed into the fatal location by an act of apparent liberality. The holders of real estate see their interest in offering inducements for the location of an institution, while a whole Church works to sustain an uphill business and—to raise the price of lots. Some gifts are very costly, in the long run. Eight years after this, Bishop Asbury made a fourth visit to Kentucky:

Oct. 4.—I was so dejected I could do little but weep. Sabbath-day it rained, and I kept at home. Here is Bethel: Cokesbury in miniature; eighty by thirty feet, three stories, with a high roof, and finished below. Now we want a fund and an income of three hundred per year to carry it on, without which it will be useless. But it is too distant from public places. Its being surrounded by the Kentucky River, in part, we now find to be no benefit. Thus all our excellences are turned into defects. Perhaps Brother Poythress and myself were as much overseen with this place as Dr. Coke was with the seat of Cokesbury. But all is right that works right, and all is wrong that works wrong; and we must be blamed by men of slender sense for consequences impossible to foresee—for other people's misconduct. Monday and Tuesday we were shut up in Bethel with the traveling and local ministry, and the trustees that could be called together. We ordained fourteen or fifteen local and traveling deacons. It was thought expedient to carry the first design of education into execution, and that we should employ a man of sterling qualifications, to be chosen by and under the direction of a select number of trustees and others, who should obligate themselves to see him paid, and take the profits, if any, arising from the establishment. Dr. [Samuel K.] Jennings was thought of, talked of, and written to.

The site of Bethel can barely be identified; not one stone is left upon another where Asbury wept over disappointment and failure. This second visitation completed, he returns to the Holston Valley, and thence to the East, through the inevitable wilderness. Leaving Crab Orchard, the company make for Cumberland Gap: "thirty-six good travelers, and a few warriors."

The first night out the Bishop notes: "I stretched myself on the ground, and borrowing clothes to keep me warm, by the mercy of God I slept four or five hours. Next morning we set off

early, and passed beyond Richland Creek. Here we were in danger, if anywhere. I could have slept, but was afraid. Seeing the drowsiness of the company, I walked the encampment and watched the sentries the whole night."

He left the Western work well manned. There were two districts: Barnabas McHenry presided in Holston, and Francis Poythress in Kentucky. Wm. Burke, John Ray, John Page, and Benjamin Northcutt, appeared for the first time—a strong reënforcement.

Northcutt, a native of North Carolina, followed in the track of Daniel Boone, at sixteen, and was converted at twenty. Though he traveled but a short time under the rule of Conference, yet his domestic and neighborhood itinerancy continued to bless the Church. In the local relation he often devoted weeks together in attending meetings both near and remote from his home. On camp-meeting occasions he was a powerful preacher. One who knew him well testified: "Few men have been permitted to live an age in one community and go down to the grave with the universal testimony that their lives were of unimpeachable purity. Yet this was the lot of Benjamin Northcutt." Side by side, at Cane Ridge, at Indian Creek, at Sugar Ridge, and in other portions of Kentucky, he labored with Ray, and Page, and the foremost, in the great revival that closed the last and opened the present century. He died of cancer, in 1854, declaring that his unwavering confidence in his Redeemer was astonishing, even to himself—that death was no terror to him.\*

Ray, also, was found and saved by the gospel in Kentucky. Not much of a preacher, he drew the bow at a venture and seldom failed to hit something. "When the Methodists visited his neighborhood he was one of the first converts, and forsaking his gay and trifling companions, turned his feet to the house of God. Impressed with the conviction that he ought to preach, he offered himself to the Conference. His first and second years were spent on the Limestone Circuit, in Kentucky; his third on Green Circuit, in East Tennessee; and the three following years in Virginia. From the year 1797 to 1800, inclusive, he traveled extensively in North Carolina. Worn down, he located and rested, then returned to the work again."† He was a man of large stature, well-proportioned, erect, and commanding

\*Jonathan Stamper's "Autumn Leaves," in *Home Circle*. †Ibid.

in appearance. He was celebrated for his capacity to command order, and tame the ruffians who sometimes infested camp-meetings. On one occasion he asked some young men to leave the seats appropriated to ladies. They did not obey; whereupon he left the stand, and was approaching them, when he overheard one of them say to his companion, "If he comes to me, I'll knock him down." Ray very coolly replied, "You are too light, young man;" and taking him by the hand, led him quietly to his appropriate seat. He was noted for his opposition to slavery, and was rough in the manner in which he obtruded that subject upon people. He would seldom lodge at the house of a slaveholder, if he could avoid it. Often at his appointments, when invited home with a stranger, his interrogatory would be, "Have you any negroes?" In the Annual Conference, whenever a preacher was proposed for admission, every eye would be turned to Father Ray, expecting him to arise, as was his custom, and say, "Mr. President, has he any negroes."\* He left Kentucky after he superannuated, on account of his dislike to slavery, and removed to Indiana. In the sixty-ninth year of his age he passed away, at his residence near Greencastle, where he had lived since 1831, esteemed and beloved by all who knew him. "Hundreds are yet living," wrote a veteran, twenty years ago, "not only in Kentucky, but in Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri—who once knew him well, and can call up, with the freshness of yesterday, the swelling melody that rolled from his clear, musical voice, as he would lift it up in his favorite hymn:

'Our souls by love together knit,  
Cemented, mixed in one!'"†

A native of Fauquier county, Va., the venerable John Page died at his home in Tennessee, in 1859, ninety-three years old. He was in his twenty-sixth year when his name first appeared on the roll. All over Kentucky and Tennessee he bore the burden and heat of the day. On the border of South-western Virginia, in 1800, a letter from Bishop Asbury reached him, calling for his services three hundred miles away. He says: "When the letter was handed me, urging me to hasten to Cumberland with all speed, I had just finished my sermon. I took my dinner and started, and reached my destined place as soon as I could." Letters to him from Bishops Coke, Asbury, and Whatcoat show

\* Rev. Jonathan Stamper's "Autumn Leaves," in *Home Circle*, 1860. † Ibid.



in how high esteem he was held by them. That of the first, dated 1803, is full and earnest:

I am glad to find that my old, venerable colleagues are able, by traveling separately, to preside at all the Annual Conferences. I frequently travel with them in spirit, and never forget them and my other American brethren any night whatever, while I am bowing my knees before the throne. O what a ravishing view the Lord sometimes favors me with of your immense continent, filled with inhabitants, and filled with sons of God! I feel myself more than ever drawn toward my American brethren by the cords of love. Let me hear from you by some merchant-ship, directing to me at the New Chapel, City Road, London—whence all letters are safely sent to me, if I be not there.\*

When John Page began to preach in Kentucky and Tennessee there were two districts, embracing nine circuits, 19 traveling preachers, and only 2,674 white and 201 colored members. At his death there were, in the same territory, five Annual Conferences, embracing forty-four districts, and four hundred and eighty-six stations, circuits, and missions; 689 traveling and 1,676 local preachers; and a white membership of 155,584, and 30,796 colored. He contributed greatly to this result.

James Haw, having done faithful and heroic service in Kentucky, was superseded on the district and sent to Cumberland Circuit in 1790. Here also he was very successful, and closed his itinerancy not so well as it deserved. Says a local chronicler: "It seemed at one time, after the arrival of the Methodist preachers in Cumberland, that all the people would embrace religion." The citizens of Sumner county made him a present of a section of land (640 acres), that he might fix his home among them. He embraced the views of O'Kelley, and by his influence and address evil-affected a few itinerants, and brought over to his views every local preacher but one in the county in which he had located; and considerable dissatisfaction obtained among the members in many of the societies.

In 1795 a young man in the fourth year of his ministry put in a timely appearance on the Cumberland Circuit. He did a great work in establishing and extending Episcopal Methodism in the West, for he had a fine courage and intellect and a consecrated spirit—William Burke. He requested Haw to meet him in public, and adjust the differences, if possible. They met, according to appointment. Burke did himself much honor: an almost ex-

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\* Published with a letter from himself, in the *South-western Christian Advocate* (Nashville), March 22, 1844.

piring cause was saved. In debate, before a large and deeply interested audience, Burke so refuted his objections on Church government as to leave Haw almost without a following. He held one sacramental meeting, and it is said that himself and wife were the only communicants. But few, if any, were either awakened or converted under his ministry after his defection; so entirely did the spirit engendered by schism destroy a once powerful ministry. An unpublished history gives a further glimpse of our old friend and of those times:

In the revival among the Presbyterians and Methodists about the year 1800, Haw joined the Presbyterians. At that time the Presbyterians were friendly with the Methodists; Methodists and Presbyterians preached and communed together; but when Haw joined the Presbyterians, as he had said many things disrespectful of Bishop Asbury and of the form of discipline, the existing union was likely to be broken. John Page and Thomas Wilkerson, stationed in Cumberland Circuit at that time, very unreservedly stated their objections to Mr. Haw, and that if he continued among them he must make such acknowledgments as would satisfy the Methodists; and if he did not, the union must be, in the nature of things, broken. The Presbyterians determined that Mr. Haw should make such public acknowledgment, that the existing union might not be interrupted.

The charges were: 1. For falsely representing Bishop Asbury as having a libidinous thirst for power. 2. For making attempts to disunite the Methodist Society in Cumberland. 3. In attempting to destroy the Methodist discipline—charges that Haw did not deny. But it was requested that he should make his acknowledgments publicly. Accordingly, on Sunday morning, at camp-meeting, before thousands, Mr. Haw made acknowledgments, full and satisfactory. He acknowledged that he had misrepresented Bishop Asbury and the Methodist discipline. After this Mr. Haw seemed to rise in the esteem of the people, and gain some influence as a preacher. He continued with the Presbyterians while he lived.\*

The Conference for the West was held in 1795 at Felix Earnest's, on Nollichucky. "Here six brethren from Kentucky met us," says the Bishop; and that was as near as he got to it. Bishop Asbury could not go, but sent help. John Buxton, Aquila Sugg, and Francis Acuff, were transferred to Kentucky, and reported for duty: historic names in Western Methodism.

Another name is introduced this year into the annals of Methodism in the West—Thomas Wilkerson, a native of Amelia county, Virginia. He had not the advantages of early religious training, as his parents were irreligious. When about thirteen years of age he was awakened, but by improper associations his good impressions were effaced. Though so young, he endeavored

\* MS. of Rev. Learner Blackman; quoted in Redford's History.

to drink in the poison of infidelity, but found no relief. When eighteen years of age, his neighborhood was blessed with a gracious revival, and among the subjects of conversion were several of his associates. A determination to dissuade them from a religious life opened afresh the springs of conviction in his own heart, and renewed his purpose to seek religion. On the following Sunday he joined the Church, and before the next, in a remarkable manner, he received the witness of the Spirit to his adoption as a child of God. This is the beginning of the meek, brave, pure, holy life and ministry, spent mainly in the West, where his name is as ointment poured forth. Under the pastoral care of John Metcalf, then traveling the circuit in which he resided, he was kept in the exercise of "gifts and graces," and at the session of the Virginia Conference held in Manchester, 1792—the stormy session that witnessed McKendree's temporary cessation from the itinerancy—Thomas Wilkerson became a traveling preacher.

He filled circuits in Virginia and North Carolina for three years, and when Asbury called for volunteers, Wilkerson offered himself. His first appointment in Kentucky was the Hinkstone Circuit, including Bourbon county. The country through which he had to pass to reach his new field was sparsely settled, and the journey hazardous. He says: "We had to pack our provisions for man and horse for nearly two hundred miles." Being detained, his company had left him. Friendly settlers on the border of this mighty sea of woods described its perils and attempted to dissuade him from his purpose to pass through it alone. Tales of murder, of the tomahawk and scalping-knife, in the depths of the very forest through which he had to pass, were rehearsed to deter him. Into the lonesome, solemn forest he plunged. He rode on and on, musing upon the loneliness of man isolated from humanity, and the still greater loneliness of him who is isolated from God. Night came; he lay down and slept, and awoke to find "his kind Preserver near." As he pursued his way a chilling consciousness of his solitary, helpless condition seized him. He apprehended danger near. Old tales of blood and torture recurred to his mind. He looked behind, before, and on either side. A moving object coming toward him startled him. He saw it was a human being; he felt it to be a savage. Turning as quietly as possible



to one side, among the bushes, he awaited the event with throbbing heart. The footfalls sounded nearer and nearer; a swarthy, fierce-looking man stepped full in view and, himself startled, grasped convulsively his rifle, but soon relaxed his grasp, and joyously greeted the affrighted preacher. Wilkerson found the stranger to be a way-worn, famished soldier from Wayne's army, on his return home. He shared with him his dried beef and home-made tree-sugar, the remnant of his scanty provisions. After checking their hunger and passing a few minutes in conversation, they knelt down and commended themselves to God, and parted, each to pursue his journey alone. Not far beyond, in a ravine whose depths the sun hardly penetrated, so walled in was it by cliffs and overarching trees, the sight of two white-ribbed skeletons, whose skulls showed the marks of the weapons used, deepened the traveler's sense of loneliness and danger, and caused a lifting up of his heart to God that brought him most sensible comfort while he pursued the path of duty.

His second appointment in the West was the Lexington Circuit; the next year, the Cumberland; in 1798, the Holston Circuit, with Tobias Gibson. Holston, with the exception of a few wide sweeps beyond, became the scene of his labors. Feeble in frame, more than once he had to retire and rest; then we meet him again on the high places of the field, till he falls into the superannuated list. In 1801 he attempted to return East, but was met by Bishop Asbury at the Western Conference, and sent again to Cumberland, where he remained two years—the circuit taking, for the first time, the name of “Nashville.” His appointments for several years threw him in the midst of the great revival which was permeating Middle Tennessee and Kentucky, and in which he bore a prominent part. The labors he performed and the exposures he underwent were too much for his constitution, previously impaired. At the Conference of 1803, when Bishop Asbury met him he said, “You look very slim;” and offered him any appointment he might choose. Acting upon the principle that the preacher who chooses his own field of ministerial labor chooses at the same time any difficulties that may ensue, he declined the proffered kindness. The church in Lexington had petitioned to be separated from the circuit. “Lexington Town,” the first station in the West, was announced, with Thomas Wilkerson as its pastor.

His excellent sense and fervent piety largely overcame the want of early advantages not only in education but in that which is still more difficult of later acquirement—social manners. This was often the subject of remark among those who knew him. It was difficult to account for the courtly smoothness and urbanity of the man, who had been born in humble life and trained in the wilderness. "In dress," says one who knew him well, "he was scrupulously neat and plain, always wearing a gray-mixed homespun suit, cut according to the primitive Methodistic style. He could never be induced to assume the clerical black." He was met one day on the streets of Nashville by a young preacher, sleek in his raven broadcloth, who accosted him with: 'Well, Brother Wilkerson, why do you not wear black? It gives dignity to the appearance of a minister, and is so apt to insure him respect, I think every minister should wear it.' Wilkerson, who by inheritance or marriage was well to do, and could have afforded the finest, replied: 'I have reasons, my brother, why I do not wear black. First, we are told that our message is glad tidings, good news; and such being the case, it seems to me that for the heralds of such a message to go clad in mourning is wholly inappropriate. In the next place, I was taken up by God from the humbler rank in life, and if the dispensation of the gospel committed to me is to be delivered to any particular class, it is to the poor. It is with them I hope to be useful; and I wish by all proper means to commend myself to them. Hence I dress so as to make myself easy of approach, and wish by this means to make them feel that I am their equal, their brother, their friend, and not elevated so far above them as to have no sympathy with them.'"

He was a delegate to the General Conference of 1828, which met at Pittsburg. When he came forward to have his quarters assigned him the committee looked at him, then looked at each other, and turned aside to deliberate; all of which resulted in sending Wilkerson away off across the river, perhaps to the village of Alleghany. He made no remonstrance. When the committee on public worship informed him that he was appointed to preach at a certain time and place, he told them No; he was out of the corporation—beyond their jurisdiction. A second time they came, and fortified their authority by saying that Bishop George said he *must* preach. (Probably the Bishop

had suggested his appointment.) He told them if the Bishop said so he was under his jurisdiction, and would comply. The Sunday evening hour saw a large congregation and a gracious surprise. The backwoodsman preached mightily and tenderly. Mourners were invited to the altar for prayer. Numbers came. A time of refreshing appeared, and sinners were happily converted. Wilkerson's star was in the ascendant; and now came what he disliked more than all the ill treatment his homespun had brought upon him. The preachers, very charitably, determined to make up a purse and buy him a suit of clothes. As they were speaking of it in the presence of good Bishop George, who knew Wilkerson at home, a mischievous twinkle played in the corner of the old Bishop's eye. "Why, brethren," said he, "if you were blacked he could buy half of you."

"His was a piety," continues one who grew up under the influence of his gracious life, "that begat meekness, gentleness, temperance, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, charity; a piety that lived and breathed in all his words and acts; a piety that made him a most estimable citizen, a kind neighbor, a just and tender master, a devoted husband; a piety conspicuous in the pulpit, in the social circle, around the fireside; a piety that maintained his spirits in cheerfulness and hope through the vicissitudes and reverses of a long life."\*

He died at his residence, near Abingdon, Virginia, 1856, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. On his bed of death, a few weeks before he passed away, he said: "This old, worn-out frame I shall willingly consign to the grave. The grave cannot hurt it. Storms may rage, the revolutions of the earth may go on, but my body shall be at rest. God has use for it, and he will take care of it till the judgment. My soul is his. He gave it; to him, blessed be his name! it will return." He was fearful of grieving the Spirit by being too anxious to depart, for he was weary of life's long labors. He said: "The grave is a quiet resting-place; death is a pleasant sleep." The last connected words he uttered were: "If I had my time to go over I would preach differently to what I have. I would preach more about eternity. I would strive to keep eternity always before the minds of my people. What is time but a vapor? Eternity is all!"

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\* Rev. George E. Naff, in *Home Circle*, Vol. II.; and General Minutes M. E. Church, South.



"In the year 1798," says John Kobler, "I was sent by Bishop Asbury, as a missionary, to form a new circuit in what was then called the North-western Territory." A native of Culpepper, Virginia, after good service at home he was, in his thirtieth year, appointed presiding elder of Kentucky District, succeeding (in 1797) the noble Poythress, who for ten years had held the post of honor and danger. One year's work on this district made Kobler acquainted with frontier life, and he was the first missionary to cross the Ohio River.

Francis McCormack, a local preacher from Western Maryland, who immigrated to Kentucky in 1795 and settled in Bourbon county, had preceded Kobler to the North-western Territory, and settled "on the Little Miami, near where Milford now stands." Up to the time of the entrance of Kobler on this missionary field, "no sound of the everlasting gospel had as yet broken upon their ears; no house of worship was erected wherein Jehovah's name was recorded; no joining the assembly of the saints, or those who keep the holy day; but the whole might, with strict propriety, be called the land of darkness and the shadow of death."\* He "spread the first table for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper that was spread north-west of the Ohio," when only "twenty-five or thirty—the sum total of all that were in the country—communed." At the ensuing Conference Kobler reported the Miami Circuit with ninety-eight white members and one colored. Henry Smith was his successor.

While a presiding elder in Kentucky, Kobler visited a village where no Methodist minister had ever preached. Through the efforts of a few influential citizens, the use of the court-house was obtained, and he was invited to preach. "All the respectable citizens attended, and listened to his sermon with profound attention." When the public services were over, the people insisted that he was wrongly named—that he was no cobbler, but a complete workman.

Soon after Kobler appeared in his new field his hands were strengthened by the arrival of Philip Gatch with a goodly company, who had left Virginia in October, for the Miami region. Here was another preacher's home in the wilderness, and another preacher and preaching-place. They had known and loved each

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\* Finley's Sketches of Western Methodism.

other in the East. The temptation, if not the necessity, of taking a hand in civil life in the formative stage of society and government, gave Gatch's future an unexpected turn:

He was made a magistrate, was a delegate to the convention which formed the constitution of the State, and was appointed by the Legislature an associate judge. He became a most influential citizen, a patriarch of the commonwealth as well as of the Church. Asbury, Whatecoat, and McKendree, were often his guests; and his old Eastern fellow-laborers—Watters, Dromgoole, and others—cheered him with letters. For twenty-two years his position on the bench of the court of common pleas reflected honor on the public justice. His friend and fellow-preacher, Judge Scott, who, as we have seen, attained the honor of the supreme court, says he was "regarded as a man of inestimable worth." His connection with the early history of the Church rendered his old age venerable, and the Ohio Conference placed his name among its superannuated preachers, that he might die with it on their record.\*

Kobler's last days were passed in Fredericksburg, Virginia. The General Minutes say: "The saint-like spirit, the Christian conversation, the dignified and ministerial bearing, and the untiring labors of John Kobler in preaching, exhorting, praying, and visiting the sick, have done more, under God, to give permanency to Methodism in Fredericksburg than any other instrumentality ever employed." Among his last active labors was a tour to the West, in his seventy-fourth year, visiting old circuits, and gathering from the rich and prosperous field one thousand dollars to build a new church in Fredericksburg. He landed at Cincinnati from aboard a steam-boat, where forty years before he had left a few settlers in cabins around a fort, then under the command of General Harrison—the great place of rendezvous for the troops which were sent by the government to guard the frontiers against the Indians. When he spread the first table for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper that was seen in the North-west, the communicants did not exceed twenty-five or thirty—the sum total of all that were in the country; now the Minutes of the Annual Conferences of Ohio returned one hundred thousand regular Church-members; so mightily had the word of God run and prevailed! Where once he preached in log-cabins, he now saw "stately churches, whose spires point toward heaven, and whose solemn bells announce the Christian Sabbath and call the attention of the multitude to the house of God." He visited the homes of his old friends of the Miami Circuit. "Taking my

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\*Stevens's History of the M. E. Church.

hand," writes a son of Gatch, "he held it for some time in silence, looking me in the face with a most impressive expression of countenance, which produced in me a sensation that I shall not attempt to describe. At length, in the most emphatic manner, he said: 'Your father was a great man in his day. He fought many hard battles for the Church. May you be a worthy son of so worthy a father!' He visited the graves of my parents, took off his hat, and stood some minutes as if absorbed in deep thought; fell upon his knees for some time, arose bathed in tears, and walked out of the grave-yard in silence."

At the Kentucky Conference of 1794 appeared Thomas Scott, transferred from the Baltimore Conference. He was born in Western Maryland, 1772. In the fourteenth year of his age he was converted; at seventeen he was received on trial into the Conference. He traveled circuits in Virginia and Maryland, and in 1793 he traveled the Ohio Circuit, a field of labor of great extent, stretching along the frontier settlements on the Ohio River in Western Pennsylvania and Virginia. In the spring of 1794, embarking at Wheeling, he descended the Ohio River on a flat-boat laden with provisions for Wayne's army. This was his best route to join the Kentucky itinerancy. After doing good work on the Danville and Lexington circuits he located, and turned his attention to the study of law. While prosecuting his legal studies, in order to support his family he worked at the tailoring business—some idea of which he had gathered in early life from his father, who was a tailor. Anxious to render him every assistance, his wife spent her leisure time in reading to her husband Blackstone's Commentaries and other law-books, while he plied his needle upon the board. In 1800 he obtained license to practice law, and in 1801 emigrated to Ohio, and settled in Chilli-cothe. There was force in Thomas Scott's character, as well as in his constitution. He outlived nearly all his contemporaries, and his sketches afford the best history of a good many men and things in his times. His first years in the itinerancy were spent as junior preacher under Valentine Cook, and Daniel Hitt, and Thomas Lyell—men whose contact had an educating power. While on Berkeley Circuit, in Virginia, he preached at Charles-town—a place where mobs had molested Methodist meetings. He preached in a grove, and requested all who wished to join the Church to meet him at his lodging at a given hour. He says:



Before the hour had arrived Dr. Edward Tiffin came into the room where I was sitting, and commenced a conversation with me. Being a stranger to me, and not knowing but that he had been one of those who had favored the mobs, I conversed with him cautiously. He however remained, and several others soon collected. After singing, prayer, and an exhortation, I gave an invitation to those who wished to become members to come forward and announce their names. The doctor was standing on the opposite side of the room fronting me. I had not perceived that he was affected; but the moment I gave the invitation he quickly stepped forward, evidently under deep and pungent conviction, roaring almost with anguish, and asked for admission into the Church. He was admitted, and before I had completed that round on the circuit he had preached several sermons. Immediately after I had received Dr. Tiffin into the Church he became convinced of his call to the ministry. Conferring not with flesh and blood, and without waiting for a license, he forthwith commenced preaching.

Tiffin had a family, and could not therefore enter the itinerancy in those times. In stature he was about five feet six inches, robust, with a capacious head, a round, florid face, and expressive features; in conversation vivid and intelligent; in the pulpit systematic and energetic. He removed to Ohio Territory, and when Scott reached Chillicothe, he found Tiffin, his convert of ten years before, there ready to receive him, a commanding citizen, preaching the gospel in the surrounding country, organizing societies, dealing out medicines with liberality to the poor, successfully performing difficult cases of surgery, and sheltering the pioneer Methodists. Tiffin became the chief citizen of Ohio; was elected a member of the convention which formed its State constitution, and soon after elected its first governor, "without opposition." He served a second term, and was afterward chosen senator in Congress, and held other places of trust. "He was an honor to his denomination, and his influence for it was one of its greatest early advantages in the West."

When Tiffin was elected governor, Scott succeeded him in the clerkship of several courts, and at the first township election of Chillicothe, under the constitution, he was elected a justice of the peace, the first one commissioned under the State organization. He was also elected secretary of the first State Senate, an office which he held several years, till he was appointed by the Legislature a judge of the supreme court, whose chief-justice he became one year later. In these prominent civil places he acquitted himself with honor, for his native capacity was much above mediocrity, and his diligent application, both to study and labor, rendered him master of his position. His official rank secured him public influence, and this he, like his friend Tiffin, consecrated to religion. They were two of the strongest pillars of Methodism in Ohio, and to their public character and labors it owes much of its rapid growth and predominant sway in that magnificent State. Had Scott been able, after his marriage, to remain in the itinerant minis-

try, he would probably have attained, as his friends predicted, its highest office and dignity; but it may be doubted whether he or Tiffin could, even as its chief bishop, have served their denomination or their generation more effectively than they did in their long and honorable lives as local preachers and public citizens. Ohio reveres the memory of her Methodist first governor and first chief-justice, and has given the name of the former to two of her towns.\*

We take leave for awhile of Kentucky and Tennessee, the scene of the great Western campaign—the gate-way to the North-west, the transmontane distributing-point of ministerial supplies; but it is with a feeling of regret that the heroes whose self-denying and mighty achievements laid not only the foundation of Methodism, but of a moral empire, can have such inadequate notice. They will live forever. Their record is on high. In the limits of this sketch, and at this distance of time, we must fail of doing reverence to a host of worthies, even by the mention of their names. Wm. Burke, Lewis Garrett, Moses Speer, Jacob Lurton, Stephen Brooks, Henry Smith, James Ward, Richard Bird, Benjamin Lakin, John Watson, Jeremiah Lawson, and their brethren, wrought on God's temple, holding the sword in one hand while the trowel was wielded by the other.

But the work is under way; the land is surveyed and mapped out; log meeting-houses are rising up; every fort and station has been preached to; the roads, if not macadamized, have been "blazed;" preachers, exhorters, class-leaders, and a body of working laymen, begin to come forward from among the converts; and the living forces of a gospel Church are all at work. Methodism is established, and ready to receive and to assimilate immigrants as they come. There are, at the close of 1799, in Tennessee, 530 white and 51 colored members; in Kentucky, 1672 white and 64 colored members; and the Miami Circuit, in the North-west Territory, has 98 members, and next year the Scioto will be added. All these are distributed into ten circuits, and served by twelve itinerants, and a number of local preachers.

Looking to the South-west, we see that vast domain opened or opening by late national treaties, and its occupancy is this year begun. Tobias Gibson, of the South Carolina Conference, having filled several appointments within the limits of his own Conference, was impressed with a strong desire to visit Natchez. He offered himself to Bishop Asbury as a missionary, and was

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\* Stevens's History of the M. E. Church.

sent to plant the banner of salvation on the lower Mississippi, in 1799, eighteen years before the Mississippi territory was admitted into the Union. He set out from Pedee—his native spot—and bent his course toward the Cumberland River. For six hundred miles he traveled through the wilderness. Arriving at the river, he sold his horse, bought a canoe, and embarked for twelve hundred miles, with saddle, bridle, and saddle-bags, and a supply of provisions. Paddling himself down the Cumberland, he dropped into the Ohio, and soon after reached the Mississippi. “God speed thee, brave-hearted boatman! Thy frail bark carries the gospel to the frontier outpost of civilized life.” He continued his solitary course down the great river until he reached Natchez. Here he founded a Methodist Church. He subsequently made four land journeys through the wilderness lying between Natchez and the Cumberland, to procure additional laborers. In the Minutes of 1800 sixty members were reported as the result of his first year’s work. We shall see Methodism from this center working its way eastward until it meets the coming tide in the Tombigbee Valley, and southward to New Orleans, and westward into Opelousas, Attakapas, and the Red River regions of Louisiana.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

Annual Conferences—Boundaries and Powers Established—Locations—Chartered Fund—Proposal to Strengthen the Episcopacy Fails—Asbury's Health Gives Way—Helpers—Whatecoat Consecrated Bishop—McKendree in the West.

THE number of the yearly Conferences and their size were found to be inconvenient. The most of them were too small to exert the moral and disciplinary power that inheres in large and well-ordered bodies. They lacked the presence of mature and guiding minds, and presented not enough variety of talent and adaptation in the ministry to meet the demands of the work. This was remedied by the General Conference of 1796, which divided the whole Connection into six Conferences, independent of each other, with defined boundaries and limited powers; with provision for a seventh in the province of Maine, "if the Bishops see it necessary." These six original Conferences were: New England, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Virginia, South Carolina, and the Western Conference. Before this regulation the Bishop had the power of appointing the number of Conferences at his own discretion, which doubtless caused much pressure to be brought to bear on him for local accommodation. This and that neighborhood wanted a Conference, and the preachers wished to be excused from distant journeys. Two years before, fourteen Conferences had been held occupying eleven months. One of them began and closed the same day. This year an account of the number of the members in each State separately was taken.\*

The summing up of statistics for 1796 showed thirty preachers admitted on trial, and forty lost out of the traveling ministry—twenty-eight by location and nine by death. The next year forty recruits joined the itinerant ranks and forty-three located. This tendency was alarming. The ranks of the ministry were weakened even more than these figures indicated, for ministers of experience and well-developed power were giving place to mere be-

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\* Province of Maine, 357; New Hampshire, 68; Connecticut, 1,050; New York, 4,044; New Jersey, 2,351; Pennsylvania, 3,011; Delaware, 2,228; Maryland, 12,416; Virginia, 13,779; Massachusetts, 824; Rhode Island, 220; North Carolina, 8,713; South Carolina, 3,659; Georgia, 1,174; Tennessee, 546; Kentucky, 1,750; Upper Canada, 474. Total 56,664.

ginners. There was a limit to endurance, even for single men, and for those with families to continue going became impossible in the present time, to say nothing of the lack of any provision in the future. They asked only to be supported—barely to subsist—while at work; not to lay up any thing. Below the bare subsistence-point in the itinerancy was—location.\* Something must be done, and at this General Conference the preachers' salaries being kept at the old mark (\$64), a supplemental scheme was devised to help those who failed to get that, and others whose necessities required more. This scheme was known as the "Chartered Fund." It was domiciled in Philadelphia, and nine trustees chosen. The main provisions may be seen:

Question: What further provision shall be made for the distressed traveling preachers, for the families of traveling preachers, and for superannuated and worn-out preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers?

Answer: There shall be a chartered fund, to be supported by the voluntary contributions of our friends, the principal stock of which shall be funded under the direction of trustees, and the interest applied under the direction of the General Conference, according to the following regulations, viz.:

1. That no sum exceeding sixty-four dollars shall in any one year be applied to the use of an itinerant, superannuated, or worn-out *single* preacher.
2. That no sum exceeding one hundred and twenty-eight dollars in any one year shall be applied to the use of any itinerant, superannuated, or worn-out *married* preacher.
3. That no sum exceeding sixty-four dollars in any one year shall be applied for the use of each widow of an itinerant, superannuated, or worn-out preacher.
4. That no sum exceeding sixteen dollars shall be applied in any one year for the use of each child or orphan of an itinerant, superannuated, or worn-out preacher.

The interest was annually divided among the Conferences, to be used under these provisions; and in addition to gifts and legacies from friends, it was provided that "the produce of the sale of our books, after the book debts are paid and a sufficient capital is provided for carrying on the business, shall be regularly paid into the Chartered Fund."

In the plea issued by the General Conference in behalf of this fund, while a just claim is forcibly presented upon true grounds,

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\* Wm. Burke's case was not a solitary one. In 1794 we find him on Salt River Circuit, Kentucky. It was nearly five hundred miles in extent, comprising five counties, to be traveled every four weeks, with continual preaching. The sorely tried itinerant writes: "I was reduced to the last pinch. My clothes were nearly all gone. I had patch upon patch, and patch by patch, and I received only money sufficient to buy a waistcoat, and not enough to pay for making it."

we get a glimpse of a few bunches of those sour grapes which the fathers ate, and in consequence the children's teeth were set on edge. There was no Missionary Board, as yet:

Our brethren who have labored on the mountains, on the Western waters, and in the poorer circuits in general, have suffered unspeakable hardships, merely from the want of some established fund, in which the competent members of our Society might safely lodge what their benevolent hearts would rejoice to give for the spread of the gospel. On the same account many of our worn-out preachers, some of whom quickly consume their strength by their great exertions for the salvation of souls, have been brought into deep distress; and the widows and orphans of our preachers have been sometimes reduced to extreme necessity who might have lived in comfort if the preachers who were the husbands on the one hand, and the fathers on the other, had not loved their Redeemer better than wife or children, or life itself. And it is to be lamented—if possible, with tears of blood—that we have lost scores of our most able married ministers—men who were obliged to retire from the general work because they saw nothing before them for their wives and children—if they continued itinerants—but misery and ruin. But the present institution will, we trust, under the blessing of God, greatly relieve us in, if not entirely deliver us from, these mighty evils. For we have full confidence that the hearts of our friends will be enlarged, and their hands stretched forth on this important occasion, and a provision will be made sufficient to preserve such objects of charity from want, which is all that is aimed at or desired.

“Many of our friends,” says a contemporary historian, “willingly subscribed to this valuable institution, and several thousand dollars were collected in a short time.” Some valuable legacies were also left by will to the trustees of this fund.

The endowment that supports a class of ministerial beneficiaries, retired and likely to be lost sight of and therefore neglected, may be wise in its principle and good in its operations; but the principle of endowing a living and working ministry has been justly objected to. To this extent some have alleged that the Chartered Fund was a virtual repudiation of the doctrine of inspiration—“They that preach the gospel must live of the gospel.” If successful, it would have made the ministry independent of the people, and great evils would come of this; if unsuccessful, the persons whom it proposes to benefit are damaged by being cut off from direct reliance upon the living Church. The opinion of one who observed its workings closely is thus given:

Though the creation of the Chartered Fund originated from the purest motives, and has been kept up and superintended by some of the most benevolent spirits of the Church, yet it has never been able to pay more than from ninety to one hundred dollars a year to each Annual Conference; and as this small amount would not, when divided among the several claimants, give to each but about two



dollars a year, it may be questioned whether, by inducing a false dependence in the public mind, this fund has not defeated the objects of its institution, and disappointed the expectations of its benevolent founders and patrons.\*

The Church moved up slowly at this point, having much to overcome in the way of her own teaching and habits. Four years later (1800), the preacher's salary was raised to eighty dollars a year, and the parsonage plan was inaugurated, providing a dwelling free of rent and supplied with heavy furniture. In the first thirty years after the organization of Episcopal Methodism sixteen hundred and sixteen itinerant preachers had united with the different Conferences. Two years later—that is, by the General Conference of 1816—seven hundred and sixty-four had located, one hundred and sixteen had died in the work, thirty-one had been expelled, nineteen had withdrawn, and six hundred and eighty-six still remained in the pastorate.† These figures show that during a period about the average of human life, immediately following the organization of the Church, only seven per cent. of her itinerant ministry died in the active service, while forty-seven per cent. had located. The locations exceeded, by seventy-eight, the whole number of itinerants then retaining membership in the Conferences—the accumulation of all these years. This loss from the pastorate of men who had completed their probation—*tested* men—shows an immense strain on the system. Depriving the Church of the benefit of practiced wisdom and ability in the pastoral relation was the first but not the only calamity. So many preachers of recognized, justly earned influence being thrown into the local ranks disturbed the equilibrium of ecclesiastical government which, by reason and Scripture, must always be largely devolved upon the pastorate; and thus was laid the foundation of revolutionary measures that in time came to the surface, with great disquiet and hurt.

A Deed of Settlement, securing and protecting Church property, in nearly the language of the present form, was the enactment of this General Conference; a timely measure, for as yet no great investment had been made in this direction.

At this session it was agreed that local preachers might be ordained deacons; and arrangements were also made for the trial of local preachers, with privilege of appeal.

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\*Bangs's History of the M. E. Church, Vol. II. †See alphabetical list in Bangs's History.

This General Conference was held in Baltimore, beginning on the 20th of October, with one hundred and twenty traveling preachers. An evidence of brevity and dispatch is furnished by one of them: "After we had finished the business of the Conference, we had the Minutes published before the preachers left town, that they might take them to their several circuits." Bishop Coke, who had been absent nearly four years, was present, and brought with him a letter of fraternal greeting from the British Conference. Hitherto Asbury, with little assistance from his colleague, had borne the whole burden of episcopal duty. He had been for some time desirous of dividing this burden; and now the magnitude of the work, the frequent and long European visits of Coke, and his own failing health, made it necessary that some one be appointed to "this office and ministry." A resolution to strengthen the episcopacy was introduced, and pending its discussion Asbury rose and stated to the Conference the fears that agitated his mind, and the reasons for them. He feared an imprudent selection, and expressed the hope that the choice might fall on some one well established in the doctrines and discipline of Methodism. "This threw a damper on all present, and seemed to paralyze the whole business." The resolution was then modified so as to read thus: "To strengthen the episcopacy in a way which should be agreeable to Mr. Asbury." "It was then almost unanimously agreed to, and requested of Mr. Asbury to make the selection himself, which he appeared very backward and unwilling to do." At this juncture of the affair a new difficulty was started. Coke, who was present, and occupied the chair, requested the suspension of action upon the subject until the afternoon session. When the body assembled again, "Dr. Coke offered himself wholly to the Conference, promising to serve them in the best manner he could, and to be entirely at the disposal of his American brethren, and to live or die among them."\* He retired, and after two days' warm debate his offer was accepted, and the resolution before agreed to "was dropped." No doubt Coke was sincere in the offer

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\*Life and Times of Jesse Lee, by L. M. Lee, D.D., with an original letter from Rev. John Kobler (1843), who sat with Lee in three General Conferences. Jesse Lee opposed the acceptance of Coke's offer: "I still say, No more English bishops. I had rather lose one than make one. I wish for an American Superintendent equal in power with Brother Asbury." See pages 370-380.

made, but he had many things on hand, and in a few months was on the ocean, in response to calls from the West Indies, and Ireland, and England.

Bishop Asbury's health failed during the next year, and on his route to the New England Conference he was obliged to lie by. Never of strong constitution, naturally subject to melancholy and dejection, his travels have been a triumph of mind over matter; a strong will and a burning zeal have borne him along. With legs and feet swollen, and his chest blistered, he has been accomplishing journeys, been presiding and preaching, at a rate both wonderful and painful to the reader who keeps acquainted with his diary. Now he stops, and yet does not stop; for through a score of years he will, to use his own expression, go "hobbling" through the United States and Territories. During the summer of 1797 he abandoned the hope of being able to meet his engagements at the extremes of the Union. Under these circumstances he wrote to Jesse Lee requesting him to hold himself in readiness to leave his district, and go with him from the approaching New England Conference to Charleston and the more southern portions of the work. A later letter bears date September 12th, appointing Lee president:

My Very Dear Brother: I am convinced that I ought not to attempt to come to the Conference at Wilbraham. Riding thirteen miles yesterday threw me into more fever than I have had for a week past. It will be with difficulty I shall get back. The burden lieth on thee; act with a wise and tender hand, especially on the stations. I hope it will force the Connection to do something, and turn their attention for one to assist or substitute me. I cannot express the distress I have had in all my afflictions, for the state of the Connection. We say the Lord will provide. True; but we must look out for men and means. Your brethren in Virginia wish you to come forth. I think the most general and impartial election may take place in the Yearly Conferences; every one may vote; and in General Conference, perhaps one-fifth or one-sixth part would be absent. I wish you to come and keep as close to me and my directions as you can. I wish you to go, after the Conference, to Georgia, Holston, and to Kentucky; and perhaps come to Baltimore in June, if the ordination should take place, and so come on to the Eastern Conference. You will have to follow my advice for your health, steel as you are.

The reference to *ordination* has this explanation: Bishop Asbury had proposed the election of Richard Whatcoat, Francis Poythress, and Jesse Lee, as assistant bishops in the United States. Ten years before, when Wesley nominated Whatcoat and Garrettson for the same office, the quadrennial General Con-



ference had not been instituted and in the absence of this federal organ the three Yearly Conferences, then held, acted on the proposition separately. It passed the first, was halted at the second, and was rejected at the third. Coke did his best to take it through, but failed. Indeed, the last Conference (Baltimore), which by numbers and position so preponderated as to be controlling, took him sharply to account for having, while out of the country and without consulting Asbury, called a Conference to meet in Baltimore some months in advance of the regular session of the Yearly Conference, and to act as a General Conference. Coke apologized for his conduct, and entered into a written agreement never to exercise any episcopal authority for American Methodism when out of America; and even then to be more considerate of coördinate powers than he had been. As this was not his first, so it was not his last blunder, as we shall see.

The proposal of Asbury for the Yearly Conferences to begin voting on nominations for his colleagues, made by himself, was extraordinary. The New England Conference and President did well to give it a quietus: it seems not to have traveled farther. True, the exigency was pressing, but the plan for meeting it was bad and the precedent worse. The worthy and worn-out Bishop had discerned the men on whom were the eyes of the people; and he felt the wants of the Church as no other man could; but he was "overseen" in his method of supply. His parental solicitude made him oblivious of the practice and principle involved when the three names should be going through successive Conferences, with his weighty indorsement, while the voters, in the absence of any opportunity of canvassing other names, were shut up to the trio. His one action involved three that come before a General Conference for consideration, and are considered of some importance: Shall the episcopacy be strengthened? "Yes," says the Bishop. How many? "Three," is the response. Whom shall we have? The same great and guileless man, knowing all the preachers by name and character, feeling as a father toward his children, settles the question—"Whatcoat, Poythress, and Lee." That he meant well and nominated wisely in this, none could doubt. If not an abusive procedure, it was liable to abuse. The parental rather than the constitutional method grew up out of his relation to the people and preachers—they were his spiritual children. It was this, or such as this, that helped to antag-

onize the destructive O'Kelley, who, after being committed to the opposition, went farther than he intended—too far to turn back. It would be alike unphilosophical and unhistorical to suppose that there was no occasion or cause whatever for that fierce faction. These abortive measures of administration, though they make no figure in current history, may enable us in part to account for a schism which never can be justified.\*

Leaving Wilbraham, Lee repaired to New Rochelle, where he found the Bishop, somewhat improved in health, though yet suffering. In a few days they commenced their journey to the South, to hold the Conferences. Passing through Virginia they met Coke, who was supposed to be in Europe. He had just landed, bringing an address from the British to the American Conference, containing a request to cancel his engagements to continue among them, and to suffer him to return to England to devote himself to the Church in his native land. The Virginia Conference, to which this was presented, declined acting on a paper and a pledge of which the General Conference only could take cognizance, but drew up a letter, which Asbury signed. After stating the sole and exclusive right of the General Conference in the premises, it affirms: "No Yearly Conference, no official character, dare assume to answer for that grand federal body. By the advice of the Yearly Conference now sitting in Virginia, and the respect I bear to you, I write to inform you that in our own persons and order we consent to his return, and *partial* continuance with you; and earnestly pray that you may have much peace, union, and happiness together."

This Conference counseled the Bishop to cease traveling, at least until the spring, and requested Lee to proceed South and supply his place. This he did. He filled twenty-five appointments for preaching in thirty days and five hundred miles, and reached Charleston on the 1st of January, 1798. It was nearly thirteen years since he had visited the city, in company with

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\*It was well, for more reasons than one, that this proposal miscarried. Poythress was far away in the West; and the accurate and thoughtful McHenry had at this period detected the decay not only of his body, but of his mind. Poythress was relieved of the Kentucky District next year, and began to pass under the cloud. In 1818 he died, in Jessamine county, twelve miles from Lexington, at the house of his sister, Mrs. Susanna Pryor, with whom he had lived, in a state of derangement, for several years. (Letter of B. McHenry to Lewis Garrett—1823—in *Recollections of the West*.)

Bishop Asbury and Henry Willis, for the purpose of establishing regular Methodist worship in the place. On that occasion Lee preached the first sermon. A gentleman named Wells received them into his house, and was converted, and his family became the warm friends and steady adherents of the Church. But now he was not—God had taken him. Bishops Coke and Asbury happened fitly to be in Charleston when this first trophy of Methodism was gathered home to his rest in heaven, and they were privileged to pay mournful tribute to the memory of this generous and noble-minded servant of Christ. Lee could only go to the grave and weep there. There were now two neat houses of worship and a flourishing company of believers to welcome him and wait on his ministry. The South Carolina Conference commenced on the 2d of January. The Minutes report the members in Society in the city at 77 whites and 421 colored; and in the State at 3,354 whites and 1,179 colored. An increase on the preceding year of 661 whites and 289 colored.

As the appointments of Bishop Asbury extended into Georgia, on the adjournment of Conference Lee visited Augusta, and went to the southern limits of the Union, preaching twenty-seven times in thirty days. Stith Mead did a great work here.

During the past year James King, the pastor in Charleston, had died—a young man “greatly esteemed”—and John Dickins, in Philadelphia; both of yellow fever. Since 1789 Dickins had been stationed there, superintending the Book Concern with economy and wisdom. Says the chronicler of the times: “He conducted the whole of his business with punctuality and integrity. He closed his life with uncommon joy and peace, and had a full assurance of eternal life. His death was more sensibly felt by the Methodist Connection in general than we had ever known or felt in the death of any other preacher that had died among us.”

The repeated presence of yellow fever in the Atlantic cities caused a change from fall to spring sessions of the Conferences, so as to begin in the South in the winter, and terminate in the extreme Eastern States in the summer.

Pursuing his route northward, Lee reached the seat of the Virginia Conference in time to preach its first sermon. Of the service he says: “We had a most powerful, weeping, shouting time; the house seemed to be filled with the presence of God; and I could truly say it was a time of love to my soul.” It was a



great joy to meet once more with Bishop Asbury, and to find him, though worn and wasted with affliction, harnessed for the conflict with sin, and going forth, as of yore, in the front of the battle. "Bishop Asbury exhorted for some time, and the people were much melted under the word." The Conference was held at Salem, in Mecklenburg county, in April, about four months from the one of the preceding fall; this was done in order to fall in with the arrangement heretofore mentioned for holding the Conferences.

Having finished in New England the visitation of the Conferences for 1798, Bishop Asbury and his traveling companions repaired to the South, in order to resume their duties at the extremity of the work, as had been done in the preceding year. January 1, 1799, beginning at Charleston—where a month is spent, including a run into Georgia—they work their way up northward; not taking straight lines between preaching-points and Conferences. And this was done the next year also, with the addition of Nicholas Snethen to the company, who was called the "silver trumpet." The Bishop lamented, "My bow is weak, if not broken;" and yet he preached often, and oftener exhorted after his younger and more vigorous co-laborers had "sermonized." His appointments were out for months in advance, sometimes for a year; and they were well improved—if he could not preach himself, he had it done, and well done. As an illustration of the general interest excited by these visitations, the fact is stated by the Bishop that from three to six thousand souls congregated weekly at their appointments for preaching.

January 1, 1800, the Conference for the southern portion of the Church was again held in Charleston. "Twenty-three ministers were present. None had died during the year, none located, and seven were received into the ministry" as itinerants. The reports from the different circuits, including those in Georgia, show an encouraging state of religion. The tide has turned: henceforth growth is reported from Georgia to Maine. There have been great searchings of heart over the late divisions; solemn days of fasting and prayer; patient waiting and faithful working; and the Lord sends now prosperity. We find this entry in the Bishop's journal, January 6th: "I desired Jesse Lee, as my assistant, to take my horse and his own, and visit, between this and the 7th of February, Coosawhatchie, Savannah, and St.

Mary's (a ride of about four hundred miles), and to take John Garven to his station. The time hath been when this journey would have been my delight, but now I must lounge in Charleston." In those days, when preachers lived in the saddle, it required but short notice for a long journey, and Lee accordingly entered upon the work prescribed the next morning. On the 18th he reached St. Mary's—the termination of his mission. Here he preached in the court-house to a large congregation of attentive hearers. From hence he hurried on, through mud, water, and swamps, preaching every day. He dryly remarks: "The country is very good for cattle, but at present it is a poor place for piety or morality. Persons who violate the laws of their country find it convenient to flee from justice either to the Indians on the West or the Spaniards on the South, and thus get beyond the laws of the United States. I heard of some people," he writes, "in the counties of Glenn and Camden, who were grown to man's estate, and some that had families, who never heard a sermon until last summer, when Brother George Clark first came among them, preaching repentance by Jesus Christ."

On his return trip Lee spent several days in Savannah, and improved the opportunity to visit Whitefield's Orphan-house, and with sad feelings contemplated the ruin. He returned to Charleston February 7th, the day appointed for his return by the Bishop, who on the occasion says: "Jesse Lee and George Dougherty came to town; the former hath been a route of about six hundred miles; and my poor gray hath suffered for it."\* Four days were given to rest, preaching, and pious visiting, when the Bishop and his party were again in the saddle, with their faces to the North. The weary Asbury rejoices once more to be on the road and in the country: "On my way I felt as if I was let out of prison. Hail! ye solitary pines! the jessamine, the red-bud, and dogwood, how charming in full bloom! the former a most fragrant smell." The reports all along the line were cheering. From the year 1795 there was an organized Society in every State, and there was now a gain of members in every one

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\* "After we had finished our business in Conference, four of the largest preachers amongst us went to a friend's store and were weighed. My weight was 259 lbs.; Seely Bunn's, 252; Thomas Lucas's, 245; and Thomas F. Sargeant's, 220; in all, 976 lbs.; and all of us travel on horseback." (Jesse Lee's Journal.)

except Pennsylvania, and there a revival flame was kindling. The Church in Augusta, Georgia, is organized, and begins to build. In the course of the previous year, says a local historian, "our Society in the city of Richmond, Virginia, began to build a meeting-house in that place, and after some time they finished it; but their difficulties in paying for it were very great." On the frontiers the circle enlarges. Southward, Oconee and Milledgeville and St. Mary's are added; eastward, Nantucket, Merrimac, Cape Cod, Cape May, and Penobscot; northward, Niagara, Montreal, Otsego, Cayuga, and Chenango; and westward, we have seen the extreme positions of Miami and Natchez occupied; and Kanawha appears on the list of appointments at the end of the century.

Bishop Asbury, not always able to keep up with his appointments at the extreme limits of the Connection, ever and anon lies by at Dromgoole's, or Merritt's, or Gough's, or Bassett's—waiting at these middle stations to fall in with his helpers, according to his strength. We look in during the weeks of enforced rest, and find him writing letters—on an average a thousand a year—planning the work and bringing up his journal; while as one of the family he enters into domestic life by shelling peas with the good housewife, winding cotton, and teaching the children their lessons. He had no lack of homes, for the Master's promise was fulfilled—he had them "a hundred-fold;" but he had no abundance of money. He writes: "One of my friends wanted to borrow or beg £50 of me—he might as well have asked me for Peru. I showed him all the money I had in the world—about \$12—and gave him five. Strange that neither my friends nor my enemies will believe that I neither have nor seek bags of money.\*"

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\* His journal, at such a time, discloses his feelings as well as his afflictions: "It is now eight weeks since I have preached—awfully dumb Sabbaths! I have been most severely tried from various quarters; my fevers, my feet, and Satan, would set in with my gloomy and nervous affections. Sometimes subject to the greatest effeminacy; to distress at the thought of a useless, idle life; but what brought the heavy pang into my heart was the thought of leaving the Connection without some proper men of their own election, to go in and out before them in my place, and to keep that order which I have been seeking these many years to establish. Lord, help me! for I am poor and needy; the hand of God hath touched me, and I think Satan *forts* himself in my melancholy, unemployed, unsocial, and inactive hours." His feet, he complains, ache so that he fears they will mortify; yet, to use his own descriptive words, he "rubs along"—"hobbles about."



The fourth General Conference assembled in Baltimore, May 6, 1800. One hundred and nineteen preachers, as members of the body, were present, and the session continued until the 20th of the month. It was resolved that hereafter the General Conference should consist only of elders who had traveled four years, and the Annual Conferences were directed to send their journals to the General Conference for revision. The Bishops, who had previously been dependent upon private liberality or the benevolence of particular societies for their support, were now authorized to look to the Annual Conferences for their allowance, each Conference having to pay its proportion of the amount necessary to be raised. This Conference recommended the purchase of ground and the erection of parsonages in each circuit. The annual salary of itinerants was raised four dollars per quarter; that is, instead of sixty-four dollars it was eighty dollars; and the rule was abolished requiring the preachers "to give an account of all the private gifts they received, whether it were money, clothing, or any thing else, toward their support; and it was to go in part of their quarterage, or else it was to be applied to make up the deficiencies of the other preachers."

The venerable Henry Smith, who lived to be the oldest preacher of his day, was awakened under the second sermon preached by Thomas Scott (afterward Judge Scott) on the Berkley Circuit. He followed Kobler in Ohio, and blessed Kentucky and Tennessee with his ministry in the hardest times. Writing "Recollections" from "Pilgrim's Rest," Baltimore county, on the early events of our history, he says:

I traveled seven years under the rule that allowed a preacher sixty-four dollars a year, including all marriage fees and presents, from a cravat down to a pair of stockings. I think our bishops were under the same rule. The last time I saw this rule imposed was at the Baltimore Conference, held at the Stone Chapel, in May, 1800. In my mind I yet see the sainted Wilson Lee hand over his fees and presents. The world never saw a more disinterested, cross-bearing, and self-sacrificing set of ministers than the early Methodist preachers. Nothing but a deep and abiding conviction of duty could induce them to volunteer in such a work. In those days the Methodists believed in a special call to the work of the ministry.

The number of Conferences was increased from six to seven by adding the New York. The bishops were allowed to admit colored preachers to deacon's orders under certain limitations and restrictions. This rule was never inserted in the Discipline. The first colored deacon ordained under it was Richard Allen,

of Philadelphia, who led the first secession of colored people from the Church, in 1816, and was elected the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. |

Bishop Coke was present at the General Conference, with an earnest request from the Old Country that he might be allowed to return. To this the Conference assented, on the condition that he come back at the end of four years. The English, and especially the Irish, Conferences entreated for a continued share in his labors. "They saw in him," says their historian, "the spirit of missionary enterprise, combined with a perfect knowledge of the details of the work, together with a quenchless zeal, which was altogether marvelous. They clearly perceived that the Methodism of England needed such a man, and sought to reclaim him."

Bishop Asbury "thought of nothing else but the resignation of his office;" and it is said he went to this Conference with his valedictory address for the occasion written out. But the first intimation of such a step was checked by the Conference, and they adopted resolutions of a highly complimentary character, thanking him for his distinguished services, and earnestly asking him to continue them, as far as his health would permit. To this he consented, and the Conference resolved to elect and consecrate an additional bishop.

Prior to the election a discussion arose as to the powers of the new bishop, and whether he should be considered subordinate to Bishop Asbury, or his equal. Coke moved that the new bishop, in the absence of Asbury, should present the appointments to the Conference for their consideration and revision; but finding the motion distasteful to the preachers, asked leave to withdraw it. The Conference, after two days' discussion, stood by the original plan, and resolved that the new bishop should be a joint superintendent.

On the first ballot no one had a majority of votes; on the second there was a tie between Jesse Lee and Richard Whatcoat; on the third ballot Richard Whatcoat was elected by a majority of four votes. A looker-on, who subsequently became an active evangelist, gives us a particular account of the Sunday following:

Sunday, the 18th, was a great day in Baltimore, among the Methodists. The ordination sermon was preached by Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., in Light Street Church. Crowds at an early hour thronged the temple. The Doctor preached

from Rev. ii. 8: "And unto the angel of the Church in Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive," etc. After the sermon, which was adapted to the occasion, Richard Whatcoat was ordained a bishop in the Church of God by the imposition of the hands of Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury, assisted by several elders. Never were holy hands laid upon a holier head. In those days we went "out into the highways and hedges and compelled them to come in." That afternoon Jesse Lee preached in the market-house on Howard's Hill, from John xvii. 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The Lord was there in a powerful manner. Several were converted. During this Conference I became acquainted with many choice spirits, both among the ministry and laity; among the rest, Dr. Thomas Coke. I not only had the pleasure of hearing the Doctor preach, and make motions and speeches in the Conference, but also of dining with him and Bishop Asbury. The Doctor was a short man, and rather corpulent. He had a beautiful face, and it was full of expression, a sweet smile often playing over his features. His eyes were dark and his look very piercing. His voice was soft and full of melody, unless raised to a very high pitch, and then it was harsh, discordant, and squeaking. His conversational powers were great; he was very entertaining.\*

Jesse Lee felt aggrieved at a report which came to his ears after the election. If the cynical philosopher was right who divided mankind into two classes—those who *do* something, and those who find fault with what is done—it would not be hard to ascertain the class to which our Virginian belonged. He had *done* too much to escape the censure and envy of some who swell the ranks of the other class. The report was this: "That Bishop Asbury said that Brother Lee had imposed himself on him and on the Connection for eighteen months past, and he would have got rid of him long ago if he could." He went promptly to the Bishop, who as promptly denied the charge, and renewed his request urgently for the continuance of Lee's services; for he felt that he and "Brother Whatcoat would be unequal to the demands of the enlarged Connection." Lee concludes his account: "So we went into Conference, and he spoke to the subject, and denied the charge, and said he was thankful for my past services, and did wish for them in the Conferences in future. We traced the report until we fixed it on T—— L——, and he did not clear himself."†

The trend of opinion is indicated not only in what is done, but in what fails to be done, by a legislative body. Here are a few items of the latter kind:

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\* Reminiscences of Rev. Henry Boehm. † This T—— L—— afterward took "orders" in another Church.



Brother Wells moved that the new bishop, in stationing the preachers, be aided by a committee of not less than three nor more than four preachers, chosen by the Conference. Voted out, next day.

Brother Tolleson's motion for a delegated General Conference was called up, and lost by a great majority.

Brother Ormond moved "that the Yearly Conferences be authorized to nominate and elect their own presiding elders." This was voted out.

Ormond was a North Carolinian by birth, and enjoys the rare distinction of a Southern radical; for after being negatived on one of the questions that persistently disturbed the Church's peace, he brought forward the other in characteristic style:

And whereas it is further observed that the rule now existing among us prevents our members increasing the number of their slaves by purchase, and tolerates an increase of number by birth, which children are often given to the enemies of the Methodists. My mind being seriously impressed with these and several other considerations, I move that this General Conference take the momentous subject of slavery into consideration, and make such alterations in the old rule as may be thought proper.

The momentous subject was taken up a few days afterward:

Brother Snethen moved that this General Conference do resolve that from this time forth no slave-holder shall be admitted into the Methodist Episcopal Church. Negatived.

Brother Bloodgood moved that all negro children belonging to the members of the Methodist Society, who shall be born in slavery after the fourth day of July, 1800, shall be emancipated: males at — years, and females at — years. Negatived.\*

One of the features of the General Conference of 1800 was the religious interest which attended it. "I believe," writes Lee, "we never had so good a General Conference before; we had the greatest speaking and the greatest union of affections that we ever had on a like occasion. The revival of religion which took place in Baltimore, during the Conference, began particularly in Old Town, where the people held meetings in a private house, and some of the preachers attended them in the afternoon of each day. Several were converted. The work then began to spread, and souls were converted in the different meeting-houses, and in different private houses, both by day and by night. The old Christians were wonderfully stirred up to cry to God more earnestly, and the preachers that tarried in town for a few days were all on fire of love. Such a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord had not been felt in that town for some

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\*See Journal of General Conference.

years." Asbury says: "The unction that attended the word was great; more than one hundred souls, at different times and places, professed conversion during the sitting of Conference. I was weary, but sat very close in Conference. My health is better than when we began." Bishop Whatcoat tells the story: "We had a most blessed time, and much preaching, fervent prayers, and strong exhortations through the city; while the high praises of a gracious God reverberated from street to street and from house to house. It was thought that not less than two hundred were converted during the Conference."

The revival at the Philadelphia Conference, which began its session at Duck Creek, in June, was one of the most remarkable that has taken place in the Church's history. Preaching and prayer-meeting and love-feast occupied the church, while the Conference met in a private dwelling. One who was present says: "Meetings were held day and night with rarely any intermission. One meeting in the church continued forty-five hours without cessation. Many were converted in private houses, and at family prayer, as well as in the house of the Lord. This revival did immense good; the preachers returned to their work like flames of fire."

This was a good beginning for the new bishop, and a renewing of strength to his senior. They completed the round of Annual Conferences, and then turned their faces to the West, and took Wm. McKendree with them, to be left there in charge of that field, known as the Western Conference, which included the Valley of the Mississippi.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

William McKendree: His Entrance upon the Ministry; Transferred to the West—Camp-meetings—Great Revival—Bodily Agitations—Methodism Planted in Missouri and Illinois; in Mississippi and Louisiana—Philip Cox, Enoch George, Gwin, Walker, Blackman, Tobias Gibson—Conference in Ohio—Results.

WILLIAM McKENDREE was born in King William county, Virginia, July 6, 1757. His parents were both natives of the same State. His father was a planter, and William was brought up in the same occupation. The schools to which he had access gave him a fair English education, so that he was for a time employed in teaching. Nature endowed him with a fine and pleasing person and address, a quick apprehension, a sound and discriminating mind, a refined taste, and that element of all true greatness known as common sense. Piety quickened and developed his intellectual powers in a marked degree. The concentration of mind and heart upon a great vocation, and the drawing "all his cares and studies this way," made an era in his mental as well as in his moral history. The following is his own account of his early life:

I do not recollect to have sworn more than one profane oath in my life, yet, as far back as memory serves, I am conscious of the prevalence of evil passions—of a heart disposed to wickedness—so that, notwithstanding the restraints by which I was kept within the bounds of a respectable morality, my heart was far from being right with God. It was "deceitful and desperately wicked." Of this deplorable state of things I became exquisitely sensible by reading the Holy Scriptures in school when I was a small boy; and with the simplicity of a child I yielded to the dictates of conscience, refrained from what appeared to be wrong, and as a child endeavored to imitate those holy men of God as set forth in the Scriptures. I would frequently seek solitary places in the woods, there fall upon my face and weep freely while I thought I was talking to Jehovah. This practice I followed until I became so serious that I was taken notice of. The school-master (who was a vain man, and boarded at my father's) and others began to laugh at me, and make remarks, and finally laughed me out of all my seriousness. I then heedlessly pursued the pleasures of the world, and do not remember to have had any more serious impressions for several years. My own experience has led me to care for those who are under religious impressions in their early days.

Some time after the Methodist preachers came into the neighborhood, a revival of religion took place; my father, mother, and several others, became professors of religion, and many joined the Church. I was then deeply convinced of sin, and resolved to set out and serve the Lord.\*

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\* The Life and Times of McKendree, by Bishop Paine.



In conformity with this resolution, as a seeker of religion he was received on trial, but halting by the way, he failed to obtain the prize. His undisguised representation of his case shows the danger of awakened persons associating with companions, however civil, who neither fear nor love God: "But my attachment to worldly associates, who were civil and respectful in their deportment, had grown with my growth, and my conviction was not accompanied with sufficient firmness to dissolve the connection; and their conduct being accommodated to my reformed manners, I continued to enjoy the friendship both of the Society and of the world, but in a very imperfect degree. They continued to counteract and impair each other, until the love of the world prevailed, and my relish for genuine piety departed. I peaceably retired from the Society, while my conduct continued to secure their friendship."

Young McKendree bore his part in the Revolution, and was at Yorktown when Cornwallis surrendered. In 1820 he passed over the ground with a friend and showed him where his camp was. A spell of sickness brought him into the jaws of death. He prayed as sinners pray when great fear is upon them, and vowed as they vow. But his confidence in his own sincerity was shaken by the startling question, suggested he knew not how: "If the Lord would raise you up and convert your soul, would you be willing to go and preach the gospel?" He shrunk from the answer, and trembled at this test of obedience. With returning strength and health he went back to the vain world with lessened confidence in promises of amendment made under fear:

In this situation I continued until the great revival of religion took place in Brunswick Circuit, under Mr. John Easter, in 1787. On a certain Sabbath I visited a gentleman who lived in the neighborhood; he and his lady were going to church, to hear a Mr. Gibson, a local Methodist preacher. The church was open to any occupant—the clergy having abandoned their flocks and the country and fled home to England. My friend declined going to church, sent a servant with his wife, and we spent the time in reading a comedy and drinking wine. Mrs. — staid late at church, but at last, when we were impatient for dinner, she returned, and brought strange things to our ears. With astonishment flushing her countenance she began to tell whom she left "in a flood of tears," who were "down on the floor," who were "converted," what an "uproar" was going on among the people—cries for mercy and shouts for joy, etc. She also informed us that Mr. John Easter was to preach at that place on the following Tuesday. My heart was touched at her representation. I resolved to seek religion, and began in good earnest to pray for it that evening.

Tuesday I went to church, fasting and praying. Mr. Easter preached from John iii. 19-22, "And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world," etc. The word reached my heart. From this time I had no peace of mind; I was completely miserable. My heart was broken up. A view of God's forbearance, and of the debasing sin of ingratitude, of which I had been guilty in grieving the Spirit, overwhelmed me with confusion. Now my conscience roared like a lion. "The pains of hell got hold of me." I concluded that I had committed the "unpardonable sin," and had thoughts of giving up all for lost. For three days I might have said, "My bed shall comfort me, then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions, so that my soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life." But in the evening of the third day deliverance came. While Mr. Easter was preaching I was praying as well as I could, for I was almost ready to despair of mercy. Suddenly doubts and fears fled, hope sprung up in my soul, and the burden was removed. I knew that God was love, that there was mercy even for me, and I rejoiced in silence.

Mr. Easter confidently asserted that God had converted my soul, but I did not believe it, for I had formed to myself an idea of conversion—how it would come, and what must follow; and what I then felt did not answer to my idea; therefore I did not believe that I was converted, but I knew there was mercy for me, and I greatly rejoiced in that. However, I soon found myself in an uncomfortable condition, for I immediately began to seek and to expect a burden of sin answerable to my idea, in order to get converted. But the burden was gone, and I could not recover it. With desire I sought rest, but I thought that greater distress than I had felt must precede that blessing, and therefore refused to be comforted. And thus for several weeks I experienced all the anguish of grasping at an object of the greatest importance, and missing my aim—of laying hold of life and salvation, then falling back into the vortex of disappointment and distress. But deliverance was at hand. Mr. Easter came round, and his Master came with him, and in the time of meeting the Lord, who is merciful and kind, blessed me with the witness of the Spirit; and then I could rejoice indeed—yes, with joy unspeakable and full of glory! Within twenty-four hours after this I was twice tempted to think my conversion was delusive, and not genuine, because I did not receive the witness of the Spirit at the same time. But I instantly applied to the throne of grace, and, in the duty of prayer, the Lord delivered me from the enemy; and from that day to this I have never doubted my conversion. I have pitied, and do still pity, those who, under the influence of certain doctrines, are led to give the preference to a doubting experience, and therefore can only say, "If I ever was converted," "I hope I am converted," "I fear I never was converted," etc., but can never say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life."

The same preacher by whom he had believed followed, "not long after," with a sermon on sanctification. McKendree examined the doctrine, and found it true; examined himself, and "found remaining corruption, and diligently sought the blessing held forth." In its pursuit he says, "My soul grew in grace and in the faith that overcomes the world;" and he thus concludes the description of this phase of his experience: "One morning

I walked into the field, and while I was musing, such an overwhelming power of the Divine Being overshadowed me as I had never experienced before. Unable to stand, I sunk to the ground more than filled with transport. My cup ran over, and I shouted aloud. Had it not been for a new set of painful exercises which now came upon me, I might have rejoiced 'evermore;' but my heart was enlarged, and I saw more clearly than ever before the danger of those in an unconverted state. For such persons I prayed with anxious care. At times, when called upon to pray in public my soul would get into an agony, and the Lord would in great compassion pour out his Spirit. Souls were convicted and converted, and Zion rejoiced abundantly in those days. Without a thought of preaching, I began to tell my acquaintances what the Lord had done for me and could do for them. It had its effect, and lasting impressions were made. Thus I was imperceptibly led on until the preachers and people began to urge me to speak more publicly."

From preaching he drew back. It was too high, it was too heavy. The thought of appearing in public as God's ambassador overwhelmed him. His father saw his silent struggle and perplexity, and gently warned him not to quench the Spirit. Again his spiritual father came to his help: "In the ninth month after I received the witness of my acceptance, the Conference came on. It was held in Petersburg. Mr. Easter requested me to fix myself and attend. I did so, and he kindly took me to his lodging. Upon his going to the Conference-room he invited me to come up at a certain hour and see the preachers. I went accordingly, and the first thing after prayer was to read out the preachers' stations, and I was appointed to Mecklenburg Circuit, with Philip Cox. This was an unexpected shock. When dismissed I was walking in another room, when my presiding elder came in and, discovering my agitation, took me in his arms and in the most feeling manner said, 'While you were standing before the Conference I believe God showed me that he had a work for you to do.' This had the most happy effect. It determined my unsettled mind."

McKendree has entered upon his life work, and we leave his history to develop with the Church. Much depends on a young preacher's first associations in the ministry, and he was fortunate in this. Philip Cox was an Englishman who led out into the



itinerancy not a few chief ministers. The next year (1789) Cox called out Enoch George, a young man even more diffident than McKendree. He introduced him to Asbury, and the Bishop sent him with a letter to a preacher who was forming a circuit at the head-waters of the French Broad and the Catawba, three hundred miles distant. "I was astonished and staggered," says George, "at the prospect of this work, but resorted to my tried friend Cox, who animated me with his advice and directions, and I set off with his benedictions and the blessing of the Lord. Thus," he adds, "I began my itinerancy." Asbury knew that if any thing could be made of the "beardless boy" presented to him by Cox, the heroic work of the frontier would do it. Cox was a very small man. At one time he felt so poorly that he thought he must quit the itinerancy; but he had himself weighed, and found that he weighed a hundred pounds. He then said, "It shall never be said that I have quit traveling while I weigh a hundred pounds." He married when he was upward of fifty years old, but continued to travel until he died. Just before his death (1793) he observed that it was such a day of peace and comfort to his soul as he had seldom felt.

Philip Cox gave such attention to selling and distributing books and tracts that he was called the Assistant Book Agent. He bore a conspicuous part in the great revival of 1787 that brought in McKendree. Eight hundred were converted in Amelia Circuit, sixteen hundred in Sussex, and eighteen hundred in Brunswick. While Philip Cox was preaching at the funeral of a little child, on the text, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," to a congregation of a hundred, "fifty of whom were old professors, out of the other fifty the Lord spoke peace to thirty before the meeting broke up." Cox, having been lamed by an accident, preached this sermon sitting on a table. The next day he preached again, in the woods, sitting in a chair placed on a table, and more than sixty souls were converted.

The genuineness of this great work "received a thousand attestations in the altered lives, persevering fidelity, and increasing holiness of those who were brought from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God." It was a great advantage to begin one's ministry amid such scenes of saving power, and under such a guide and leader as Philip Cox.

McKendree, after preaching on circuits in his native State and the Carolinas, was put in charge of a district which extended from the Chesapeake Bay over the Blue Ridge and terminated at the foot of the Alleghany Mountains. Next, his admirable preaching and administrative abilities found scope in a district of similar dimensions in the Baltimore Conference. In the fall of 1800 Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat passed through his field of labor, and took him with them to the Western Conference, which met at Bethel, Kentucky, in October. McKendree was accustomed to "keep house in his saddle-bags." It was said he could pack more into them, and in better order, than other men. He therefore went at three hours' notice. He was appointed to the oversight of the whole Conference in the character of a presiding elder of the district. If opportunities make great men, here was an opportunity. His character developed, his reputation and usefulness grew, and his health was established.

Quitting Greenbrier, and passing through Wythe Court-house, they "began to bend for Holston." "My mind," says Asbury, "hath been kept in peace; I had enough to do to drive; I could think but little—only now and then sending up a message to heaven." Leaving his chaise with Vanpelt, he borrows a horse, and inducts the presiding elder into wilderness-travels by the way of Bean's Station and Cumberland Gap. At Conference ten traveling preachers were present; the session lasted but two days. Two were admitted on probation, one member located, fourteen local and four traveling preachers were ordained.

After the session Asbury, Whatcoat, and McKendree traveled and preached together from the center of Kentucky to Nashville. On the journey McKendree, in the grand field where he was to develop and which was to be developed by him, located a church in the "barrens," a region rich in soil but scarce of trees. One of his first appointments was to have a local preacher join him there and hold a meeting; "and in the course of the year a society was formed, and a gracious work commenced, and they built a church; but as the timber was low, logs could not be found of sufficient length to build a four-square house large enough to hold the congregation, so they built a house with twelve corners."

Asbury and his company lodged a few miles in the country on Saturday night, where he preached. "Brothers McGee, Sugg, Jones, and Speer, local preachers, came to meet me. We had a

small shout in the camp of Israel." The Rev. William Lambuth was the preacher in charge of Cumberland.\* Asbury says:

October 19, 1800.—I rode to Nashville, long heard of but never seen by me until now. Some thought the congregation would be small, but I believed it would be large. Not less than one thousand people were in and out of the stone church, which if floored, ceiled, and glazed, would be a grand house. We had three hours' public exercises. Mr. McKendree upon "The wages of sin is death;" myself on Rom. x. 14, 15; Brother Whatcoat on "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." We returned the same evening, and had a night meeting at Mr. Dickinson's.

His old North Carolina friend, and the Gaius of the Church, had moved to the West a year before, and opened a farm twelve miles from Nashville; and he adds: "I had a feeling sight of my dear old friend Green Hill, and his wife. Who would have thought we should ever meet in this distant land? I had not time, as formerly, to go to their house to eat and sleep."

Next day they were in the midst of new scenes—a camp-meeting, at Drake's Creek Meeting-house. It was under the direction of five Presbyterian preachers—Craighead, Hodge, Rankin, McGee, and Adair. "A sacramental solemnity" of four days was being concluded. The visitors were invited to preach. Asbury says: "We came in, and Brother McKendree preached upon Jer. iv. 14; after him Brother Whatcoat upon 'We know that we are of God;' I also spoke on 'The work of God.'"

Tuesday, 21.—Yesterday, and especially during the night, were witnessed scenes of deep interest. In the intervals between preaching the people refreshed themselves and horses, and returned upon the ground. The stand was in the open air, embosomed in a wood of lofty beech-trees. The ministers of God—Methodists and Presbyterians—united their labors, and mingled with the child-like simplicity of primitive times. Fires blazing here and there dispelled the darkness, and the shouts of the redeemed captives, and the cries of precious souls struggling into life, broke the silence of midnight. The weather was delightful—as if heaven smiled, whilst mercy flowed in abundant streams of salvation to perishing sinners. We suppose there were at least thirty souls converted at this meeting. I rejoice that God is visiting the sons of the Puritans, who are candid enough to acknowledge their obligations to the Methodists.

This is known as the great revival year in the West. No remarkable preacher like Whitefield passed through the land, but

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\* His son, Rev. John R. Lambuth, built the first Methodist church in Mobile (1827), called in later days the "Old Bee-hive;" and his grandson, Rev. J. W. Lambuth, has been a missionary to China since 1852.



the uncommon work seems to have begun and continued in the use of the common means of grace. Worldliness, immorality, infidelity, were prevalent and powerful. It required a mighty shaking to save the land. To arrest and to impress the public mind a striking display of divine influence was necessary, and the God of all grace was pleased to grant it. Ministers had faithfully preached the word and endured hardness. Sowers had gone forth weeping, bearing precious seed. But immigration brought in an overwhelming population, and new scenes and adventures absorbed the people. Iniquity abounded. When the enemy came in like a flood, then the Lord lifted up a banner. The Church had for years barely been able to hold its own—here standing still and there receding. Power from on high came; feebleness was made strong, and like a conquering army it moved forward. No change in political administration, no turn or opening of the currents of trade or travel, could possibly have such an effect upon the West as this revival. It began within the old Cumberland Circuit, where McHenry and Wilkerson and Page, and others like them, had bestowed much labor. In 1798 William Burke served it alone. He says: "I had not the pleasure of seeing the face of a traveling preacher through the entire year. The circuit had become very large, the country was settling very fast, and many additions to the Church made by certificate. During this year many local preachers settled in the bounds of the circuit: the Rev. John McGee at Dixon Springs, and the Rev. Jesse Walker on White's Creek."<sup>4</sup> Settled within the same territory were three or four earnest Presbyterian preachers, one of whom was the younger brother of John McGee. These two brothers were honored instruments in promoting the revival and uniting the two denominations in it. They were born in Guilford county, North Carolina, of Presbyterian parents. The elder brother became a Methodist preacher, and the younger, converted under his ministry, took orders in the Presbyterian Church; but they continued of one heart and one mind. The Hon. and Rev. Green Hill, a few years before locating in Wilson county, went on a tour through the lower part of the Cumberland Circuit, preaching and baptizing. "At a new town on the south side of Cumberland River, twelve miles below Clarksville," he preached, and says: "I had much liberty in speaking. The people were attentive, and flexible as melted wax. I

hope good was done." Four days later: "We then went up to Winters's (thirteen miles), and I preached to an attentive congregation. Three Baptist preachers and one Presbyterian preacher were present, and all spoke in turn, after I had preached, but without controversy, and parted very affectionately."

It was into this neighborhood that John McGee, with his Presbyterian brother, came on a preaching tour. We give John McGee's account of it:

"We loved, and prayed, and preached together; and God was pleased to own and bless us and our labors. In the year 1799 we agreed to make a tour through the Barrens, toward Ohio, and concluded to attend a sacramental solemnity in the Rev. Mr. McGready's congregation, on Red River, in our way. When we came there I was introduced by my brother, and received an invitation to address the congregation from the pulpit; and I know not that ever God favored me with more light and liberty than he did each day while I endeavored to convince the people they were sinners, and urged the necessity of repentance, and of a change from nature to grace, and held up to their view the greatness, freeness, and fullness of salvation, which was in Christ Jesus, for lost, guilty, condemned sinners. My brother and the Rev. Mr. Hodge preached with much animation and liberty. The people felt the force of truth, and tears ran down their cheeks; but all was silent until Monday, the last day of the feast. Mr. Hodge gave a useful discourse; an intermission was given, and I was appointed to preach. While Mr. Hodge was preaching a woman in the east end of the house got an uncommon blessing, broke through order, and shouted for some time, and then sat down in silence. At the close of the sermon Messrs. Hodge, McGready, and Rankin went out of the house; my brother and myself sat still; the people seemed to have no disposition to leave their seats. My brother felt such a power come on him that he quit his seat and sat down on the floor of the pulpit (I suppose, not knowing what he did). A power which caused me to tremble was upon me. There was a solemn weeping all over the house. Having a wish to preach, I strove against my feelings; at length I rose up and told the people that I was appointed to preach, but there was a greater than I preaching, and exhorted them to let the Lord God Omnipotent reign in their hearts, and to submit to him, and their souls should live. Many broke silence; the woman in the east end of the house shouted tremendously. I left the pulpit to go to her, and as I went along through the people it was suggested to me, "You know these people are much for order, they will not bear this confusion; go back and be quiet." I turned to go back, and was near falling. The power of God was strong upon me; I turned again, and losing sight of the fear of man, I went through the house shouting and exhorting with all possible ecstasy and energy, and the floor was soon covered with the slain. Their cries for mercy pierced the heavens, and mercy came down. Some found forgiveness, and many went away from that meeting feeling unutterable agonies of soul for redemption in the blood of Jesus. This was the beginning of that glorious revival of religion in this country which was so great a blessing to thousands; and from this meeting camp-meetings took their rise. One man, for want of horses for all his family to ride and attend the meeting, fixed up his wagon, in which he took them and his

provisions, and lived on the ground throughout the meeting. He had left his worldly cares behind him, and had nothing to do but attend on divine service.

The next meeting was a camp-meeting. A number of wagons loaded with people came together and camped on the ground, and the Lord was present and approved of their zeal by sealing a pardon to about forty souls. The next camp-meeting was on the Ridge, where there was an increase of people, and carriages of different descriptions, and a great many preachers of the Presbyterian and Methodist orders, and some of the Baptist—but the latter were generally opposed to the work. (Preaching commenced, and the people prayed, and the power of God attended. The nights were truly awful. (The camp-ground was well illuminated; the people were differently exercised—some exhorting, some shouting, some praying, and some crying for mercy, while others lay as dead men on the ground. At this meeting it was computed that one hundred souls were converted.) But perhaps the greatest meeting we ever witnessed in this country took place shortly after, on Desha's Creek, near Cumberland River. Many thousands of people attended. The mighty power and mercy of God were manifested. The people fell before the word like corn before a storm of wind, and many rose from the dust with divine glory shining in their countenances, and gave glory to God in such strains as made the hearts of stubborn sinners to tremble; and after the first gust of praise, they would break forth in volleys of exhortation.

Camp-meetings grew out of the revival, and became a means of prolonging and extending it. Originally designed to meet the wants of a sparsely settled country, and to make a small supply of preaching go as far as possible, there is a principle which makes them useful to other communities. The moral and religious power of association, cessation from labor, abstraction of mind and body from home-life and its cares, concentrated attention to one thing, and that the most important of all things, for days together, under circumstances most favorable for instruction and exhortation—these have commended the camp-meeting to old and dense communities, and made it a religious institution of our current century. From the wagon-cover and rude arbor with fresh-scented leaves, located where there is much water for man and beast; from the straw-floored tent and pine-knot fire-stand, camp-meetings, in many places, have come to represent taste and comfort, and even luxury, in their structures and arrangements. In this direction lies their danger. They may be useful still, but their golden days date back to virgin forests and new settlements, when men came to the preaching at a time the preaching could not go to them.

From Tennessee through Southern Kentucky the revival spread until 1801, when its marvels were seen and felt in middle Kentucky; and with rudely improvised camp-meetings the scene



extended into the North-west, and moved eastward. By 1802 camp-meetings were established east of the mountains, and from New England to Mississippi have continued to this day. Tens of thousands were awakened and converted; scoffers were strangely rebuked; fear fell upon the people, and many fled to escape yielding. In America, as in England, bodily agitations and exercises attended spiritual excitement, and were equally an offense to some and a wonder to all.\* In this respect no localities in the West exceeded those in which Presbyterian ministers were settled. William Burke describes a quarterly-meeting for Lexington Circuit, in June, 1801: "On Saturday we had some indications of a good work. On Saturday night we had preaching in different parts of the neighborhood, which was the custom; so that every local preacher and exhorter was employed in the work. Success attended the meetings, and on Sunday morning they came in companies, singing and shouting on the road. Love-feast was opened Sunday morning at eight o'clock, and such was the power and presence of God that the doors were thrown open, and the work became general, and continued till Monday afternoon, during which time numbers experienced justification by faith in the name of Jesus Christ. The work now spread into the several circuits. Presbyterian congregations were universally wakened up—McNamer's, on Cabin Creek; Barton Stone's, at Cane Ridge; Reynolds's, in Paris; Lyle's, at Salem; Rankin's, at Walnut Hills; Blythe's, at Lexington and Woodford; Walsh's, at Cane Run."

A well known-writer of Kentucky, in the *Methodist Magazine* of sixty years ago, describes the advent of the revival:

The Rev. Wm. McKendree, presiding elder of the district, was in the lower part of the State about the commencement of the revival, and became much engaged in it. In the latter part of 1800, or early in 1801, he came up to the center of the State, and in many places was the first to bear the tidings of these singular meetings, which had recently commenced, and had so greatly attracted the attention of multitudes. I shall never forget the looks of the people who had assembled in a congregation composed mostly of Methodists and Presbyterians, and their adherents, when, after the conclusion of a pathetic sermon, he gave an interesting statement of the progress of it from what he had seen. (Whilst he spoke the very sensations of his soul glowed in his countenance. He described them in their native simplicity: he told of the happy conversion of hundreds; how the people continued in their exercises of singing, praying, and preaching on the ground, surrounded by wagons and tents, for days and nights together; that many were so

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\* See pages 158-161 for an explanation of these phenomena.

affected that they fell to the ground like men slain in battle. The cries of the penitents and rapture of the healed appeared to be brought to our view; and that the work, instead of declining, was progressing to the interior. After this description given by him, it was unnecessary to exhort the faithful to look for the like among themselves. Their hearts had already begun to beat in unison with his, whilst sinners were generally melted into tears.) As for my own feelings, though a stranger to religion at that time, they will never be forgotten—I felt, and I wept.

These meetings began, as the season permitted, to make their gradual approach toward the center of the State. It was wonderful to see what an effect their approach made upon the minds of the people. Here in the wilderness were thousands and tens of thousands hungry for the bread of life. A general move was visible in the congregations previously to the arrival of these meetings. The devout Christians appeared to be filled with hope. Their hearts were greatly enlarged to pray for the prosperity of Zion. The formalists were troubled with very uneasy sensations; backsliders became terrified; the wicked in general were either greatly alarmed or struck with solemn awe. Indeed, such was the commotion that every circle of the community appeared to have their whole attention arrested. Many were the conjectures respecting these meetings. Things, however, did not continue long to keep the attention of the people in suspense. The camp-meetings began to approach nearer and nearer to the center; one meeting after another was appointed in succession; and the number that attended them is almost incredible to tell. When collected on the ground, and whilst the meetings continued, such crowds would be passing and repassing that the roads, paths, and woods appeared to be literally strewn with people. Whole settlements and neighborhoods would appear to be vacated; and such was the draught from them that it was only here and there that a solitary house would contain an aged house-keeper—young and old generally pressing through every difficulty to see the camp-meeting.

The Presbyterians and Methodists now united in them; hence it was that they took the name of General Camp-meetings. In consequence of so great a collection of people, it frequently happened that several preachers would be speaking at once. Nor were they at a loss for pulpits—stumps and logs served as temporary stands from which to dispense the word of life. At night the whole scene was awfully sublime.\*

At Cabin Creek and Point Pleasant were memorable scenes. The meeting at Indian Creek, Kentucky, began on the 24th of July, and continued five days. The general camp-meeting, held at Cane Ridge, seven miles from Paris, Bourbon county, began on the 6th day of August, and continued a week. The Rev. Barton W. Stone, a leading Presbyterian minister in Kentucky, describes certain phenomena that prevailed: "The bodily agitations or exercises attending the excitement in the beginning of this century were various, and called by various names: as the falling exercise,

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\* *Methodist Magazine*, Vol. II., pp. 221-273.

the jerks, the dancing exercise, the laughing exercise, and so on. The falling exercise was very common among all classes—the saints and sinners of every age and grade, from the philosopher to the clown. The subject of this exercise would generally, with a piercing scream, fall like a log on the floor or earth, and appear as dead.” And “of thousands of similar cases” he gives specimens. The “jerks” sometimes affected the whole body, sometimes a part of the body. The same writer and eye-witness continues:

When the head alone was affected, it would be jerked backward and forward, or from side to side, so quickly that the features of the face could not be distinguished. When the whole system was affected, I have seen the person stand in one place and jerk backward and forward in quick succession, the head nearly touching the floor behind and before. All classes—saints and sinners, the strong as well as the weak—were thus affected. I have inquired of those thus affected if they could not account for it, but some have told me that those were among the happiest seasons of their lives. I have seen some wicked persons thus affected, and all the time cursing the jerks, while they were thrown to the earth with violence. Though so awful to behold, I do not remember that any one of the thousands I have seen thus affected ever sustained any injury in body. This was as strange as the exercise itself.

The laughing exercise was frequent, confined solely to the religious. It was a loud, hearty laughter, but it excited laughter in none that saw it. The subject appeared rapturously solemn, and his laughter excited solemnity in saints and sinners. It was truly indescribable.

The running exercise was nothing more than that persons feeling something of these bodily agitations, through fear attempted to run away, and thus escape from them; but it commonly happened that they ran not far before they fell, where they became so agitated that they could not proceed any farther.

I knew a young physician, of a celebrated family, who came some distance to a big meeting to see the strange things he had heard of. He and a young lady had sportively agreed to watch over and take care of each other if either should fall. At length the physician felt something very uncommon, and started from the congregation to run into the woods. He was discovered running as for life, but did not proceed far before he fell down, and there lay until he submitted to the Lord, and afterward became a zealous member of the Church. Such cases were common.

“Thus have I,” says Mr. Stone, “given a brief account of the wonderful things that appeared in the great excitement in the beginning of this century. That there were many eccentricities and much fanaticism in this excitement was acknowledged by its warmest advocates; indeed, it would have been a wonder if such things had not appeared in the circumstances of that time. Yet the good effects were seen and acknowledged in every neigh-



borhood and among the different sects. It silenced contention and promoted unity for awhile."\*

McKendree's presence in the West at this time was opportune. He not only promoted the revival, in every healthful aspect, but guided the Church safely and to the best issues in the midst of its scenes. The floods were out. Methodism spread all sail, and was stronger in numbers and in every other respect from that blessed day forward. The union between Methodists and Presbyterians for coöperation was not allowed to end in disintegration. This union extended to several things, including joint committees empowered to make regulations and to appoint preachers for the camp-meetings and sacramental occasions. McKendree took care that its termination should be without odium or loss. The peculiarities of Methodist usages and doctrines he firmly maintained—class-meetings and love-feasts with closed doors, and itinerant preaching; and where they had been suspended or had faded out, he brought them into position again.† The Presbyterian confederates fared not so well.

Methodism has been defined "a missionary Church in organization, and a revival Church in spirit." It was therefore well adapted to the revival—its scenes and situation. The doctrines that were preached in the revival were Methodist: universal redemption; free salvation, full salvation, present salvation; justification by faith; regeneration by the Holy Ghost; the witness of the Holy Spirit that the believer is born of God; the joy of religion, which is the fruit of the Spirit; and to-day is the day of salvation. The methods were Methodist: the presiding elder marshaled his hosts at given points; the system of Church-government furnished a leader, and the off-hand, extemporaneous style of the pulpit was all in place. Hence camp-meetings were continued, and have become a Methodist peculiarity and

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\* Early Times in Middle Tennessee, pp. 70-75. † Our McKendree's advice to preachers and people was: "Hold fast to your doctrine and discipline. Others may get along without rule, but we cannot." This was wholesome and seasonable advice, and was attended to. It gave offense to some, but was a means of keeping us together, and we prospered. But, mournful to tell, those who got above creeds, forms, and confessions, while they professed to be Christians, went from one extreme to another, till three of their most zealous and flaming ministers (Presbyterian) landed in Shakerism; one, if not more, became an Arian; one, at least, went among the Christians; and the rest held fast, or returned to, their Confession of Faith. (H. Smith's Recollections of an Old Itinerant, pp. 59, 60.)

possession. But there was an unusual strain on the other party. Barton W. Stone afterward united with the followers of Alexander Campbell, and Rankin, with two other Presbyterian ministers, joined the Quakers. Among the members were Marshallites and Stoneites: some who affected uncommon zeal denounced confessions of faith, Church discipline, and all such things. The Arminian tendency of the Cumberland Presbytery, and their refusal to withhold license from preachers who were useful and acceptable to the community, but were not classically educated, brought about a serious and permanent division of the Presbyterian Church, and resulted in the organization of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. "But," says an actor in those times, "amidst these convulsions in the religious community, the Methodists kept on the even tenor of their way, adhering to their discipline, and teaching that system of doctrine which was not only the popular but the useful doctrine in the revival."

When the Western Conference met at Strother's, near Gallatin, Tennessee, Oct. 2, 1802, Asbury was present, but too feeble to preach. He says: "I was able to ordain, by employing Brother McKendree to examine those who were presented, and to station the preachers." Two men of mark were admitted on trial—Jesse Walker and James Gwin. The work had so enlarged that it was found necessary to divide the one district into three: the Holston District, with John Watson; and the Cumberland, with John Page, as presiding elders. McKendree remained on the Kentucky District. The Bishop being very infirm, and suffering from long rides on horseback, McKendree accompanied him on his return through East Tennessee. Asbury's journal speaks of his kindness on this trip, and frequently alludes to his preaching. "Brother McKendree made me a tent of his own and John Watson's blankets, and happily saved me from taking cold, while I slept about two hours under my grand marquee. Brother McKendree threw his cloak over the limb of a tree, and he and his companion took shelter underneath and slept also. I think I will never more brave the wilderness without a tent." After some time he adds: "I have been sick for twenty-three days—ah, the tale of woe I might relate! My dear McKendree had to lift me up and down from my horse, like a helpless child. For my sickness and suffering, I conceive I am indebted to sleeping uncovered in the wilderness."

At the Conference, October, 1803, near Cynthiana, Bishop Asbury found it necessary to form a new district north-west of the Ohio River, with William Burke as presiding elder, embracing the extensive territory along the waters of the Muskingum, the Little Kanawha, Hockhocking, Scioto, Miami, and Guyandotte rivers. The Western Conference again met at Gerizim, in Northern Kentucky, October, 1804. The failure of the Bishops to reach the Conference devolved upon the body the election of its president, and McKendree performed the duties of the office. Several preachers were admitted on trial who subsequently attained notoriety. Among them were Samuel Parker, the sweet singer in Israel, and a fine specimen of "nature's noblemen" improved by divine grace—we shall meet with him in Mississippi, and find his grave there; Peter Cartwright, a fearless, strong, rough, and ready man; Miles Harper, a man of fine order of mind by nature—a revivalist, and of great physical capacity to sustain the labor of the saddle, the pulpit, and the altar; James Axley, of rugged strength and candor, but withal devoted and kind; and Thomas Lasley, whose missionary footsteps are yet seen, with Axley's, in South-western Louisiana.

The Cumberland District fell to McKendree the next year, and he continued on it till the year 1808. He traveled from Nashville through Kentucky and Illinois to Missouri, a distance of fifteen hundred miles, in order to pass round and through his district. Among the agents and helpers by which he developed it two men deserve special mention. Jesse Walker was a Church Extension Society within himself. One who knew him and his work gives this description:

In all my intercourse with Bishop McKendree, there was no man whose name was more frequently mentioned by him than Jesse Walker. He was to the Church what Daniel Boone was to the early settler—always first, always ahead of everybody else, preceding all others long enough to be the pilot of the new-comer. Brother Walker is found first in Davidson county, Tennessee. He lived within about three miles of the then village of Nashville, and was at that time a man of family, poor, and to a considerable extent without education. He was sent by the bishops and presiding elders in every direction where new work was to be cut out. His natural vigor was almost superhuman. He did not seem to require food and rest as other men; no day's journey was long enough to tire him, no fare too poor for him to live upon; to him, in traveling, roads and paths were useless things—he blazed out his own course; no way was too bad for him to travel—if his horse could not carry him he led him, and when his horse could not follow he would leave him and take it on foot; and if night and a cabin did not come to-



gether, he would pass the night alone in the wilderness, which with him was no uncommon occurrence. Looking up the frontier settler was his chief delight; and he found his way through hill and brake as by instinct—he was never lost; and, as Bishop McKendree once said of him, in addressing an Annual Conference, he never complained; and as the Church moved West and North, it seemed to hear Walker before it. Every time you would hear from him, he was still farther on; and when the settlements of the white man seemed to take shape and form, he was next heard of among the Indian tribes of the North-west.\*

Rev. James Gwin is a prominent figure in Western Methodism. He settled on the Cumberland in time to receive Barnabas McHenry into his cabin, and with his wife joined the Church at his first meeting. When a "horse load of books and pamphlets abusing Methodist bishops and Methodist government" were sent into the settlement to support Haw's alliance with O'Kelleyism, he remained unmoved. A soldierly man, six feet high, with a strong face and brave heart, Gwin was in the expedition of 1798 that broke up the Cherokee pirates at Nickajack and freed the navigation of the Tennessee from Indian perils. He was one of General Jackson's chaplains at the Battle of New Orleans, and Jackson, who had a very great esteem for him, put him in charge of the wounded and of the hospital. Let us see James Gwin's account of these times:

Brother McKendree, having been appointed to the charge of the Western work, soon formed a plan to carry the gospel to every neighborhood. He employed as many local preachers and exhorters as he could to visit the uncultivated regions; and they went forth, and the Lord went with them, and the tidings of salvation were soon heard in almost every settlement. As I commenced about this time to speak in public he sent me to visit new settlements, and I continued preaching from place to place until our Conference came on; then I was received into the traveling connection on trial. The business of Jesse Walker and myself, who were received at the same time, was to enlarge the work. Brother Walker went on forming circuits west and north until he reached the Ohio River, and Brother McKendree devised a plan to carry the gospel west of the Ohio to the Mississippi River. And as Louisiana had been purchased and brought into our government, he sent Brothers Walker and Lewis Garrett to make a trial in that region, where they soon succeeded in planting the standard of the cross.

September, 1806, Bishop Asbury's journal says: "Saturday, 20th, Western Conference began, and ended on Monday. There are fourteen hundred added within the bounds of this Conference—fifty-five preachers stationed, all pleased. The brethren were in want, so I parted with my watch, my coat, and my shirt."

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\*A. L. P. Green, D.D., *Biographical Sketches.*

Having reconnoitered the frontier, and sent Jesse Walker to Illinois and John Travis to Missouri, McKendree follows them. This narrative of his tour is by James Gwin:

In the year 1807, Brother McKendree, A. Goddard, and myself, set out to visit the settlements of Illinois. We crossed the Ohio River, took the wilderness, and traveled until night. Not being able to get to any habitation, we camped out. Brother McKendree made us some tea, and we lay down under the branches of a friendly beech, and had a pleasant night's rest. Next morning we set out early, traveled hard, and got some distance into the prairie, and here we took up for the night. The next night we reached the first settlement, tarried a day there, and crossing Kaskaskia River lodged with an old Brother Scott. Here we met with Jesse Walker, who had formed a circuit and had three camp-meetings appointed for us. After resting a few days, we set out for the first camp-meeting. In twelve miles we reached the Mississippi River, and having no means of taking our horses across we sent them back, crossed the river, and, with our baggage on our shoulders, went to the camp-ground, having fallen in with Brother Travis on the way. About forty were converted at this meeting.

From this camp-meeting we returned across the river to Judge S——'s, who refreshed us and sent forward our baggage in a cart to Brother Garrettsen's, where our next meeting was to be held, which was called the Three Springs. We arrived on Friday morning on the camp-ground, which was situated in a beautiful grove surrounded by a prairie. A considerable congregation had collected, for the news of the other meeting had gone abroad and produced much excitement. Some were in favor of the work, and others were opposed to it. A certain major had raised a "company of lewd fellows of the baser sort" to drive us from the ground. On Saturday, while I was preaching, the major and his company rode into the congregation and halted, which produced confusion and alarm. I stopped preaching for a moment and invited them to be off with themselves, and they retired to the spring for a fresh drink of brandy. The major said he had heard of these Methodists before; that they always broke up the peace of the people wherever they went; that they preached against horse-racing, card-playing, and every other kind of amusement. At three o'clock, while Brother Goddard and I were singing a hymn, an awful sense of the divine power fell on the congregation, when a man with a terrified look ran to me and said, "Are you the man that keeps the roll?" I asked him what roll. "That roll," he replied, "that people put their names to who are going to heaven." I supposed he meant the class-paper, and sent him to Brother Walker. Turning to Jesse Walker, he said, "Put my name down, if you please," and then fell to the ground. Others started to run off and fell; some escaped. We were busy in getting the fallen to one place, which we effected about sunset, when the man who wished his name on the roll arose and ran off like a wild beast. Looking round upon the scene reminded me of a battle-field after a heavy battle. All night the struggle went on. Victory was on the Lord's side; many were converted, and by sunrise next morning there was a shout of a king in the camp. It was Sabbath morning, and I thought it the most beautiful morning I had ever seen. A little after sunrise, the man that had run off came back, wet with the dews of the night and with strong symptoms of derangement. At eleven o'clock Brother McKendree administered the holy

sacrament, and while he was dwelling upon its origin, nature, and design, some of the major's company were affected, and we had a melting time. After sacrament, Brother McKendree preached, all the principal men of the country, and all in reach who could get there, being present. His text was, "Come, let us reason together;" and perhaps no man ever managed the subject better, or with more effect. His reasoning on the atonement, the great plan of salvation, and the love of God, was so clear and strong, and was delivered with such pathos, that the congregation involuntarily arose to their feet and pressed toward him from all parts. While he was preaching he very ingeniously adverted to the conduct of the major, and remarked, "We are Americans, and some of us have fought for our liberty, and have come here to teach men the way to heaven." This seemed to strike the major, and he became friendly, and has remained so ever since.

This was a great day. The work became general—the place was awful, and many souls were born of God. Among the rest was our wild man. His history is a peculiar one. He lived in the American Bottom, had a fine estate, and was a professed deist. He told us that a few nights before we passed his house he dreamed that the day of judgment was at hand, and that three men had come from the East to warn the people to prepare for it; that so soon as he saw us he became alarmed, believing we were those men; and having ascertained who we were, he came to the camp-meeting. He became a reformed and good man.

The third camp-meeting was held, and on the last day one hundred joined the Church.

McKendree has also left a concise reference to this tour, in which he notices the following facts: The camp-meeting they attended across the Mississippi River, in the present State of Missouri, was the first meeting of the kind ever held on the north-west of the Mississippi River, and they walked about forty miles in getting to it. He further says: "Four Sabbaths excepted, I have attended popular meetings every week since the beginning of February, in which time I have ridden about two thousand seven hundred miles through the wilderness to the Illinois and back, spent considerable time in the most sickly part of that and this country, and yet, blessed be God, my health and strength have been preserved." This trip occupied about two months, and was the commencement of a glorious revival across the Ohio, and upon both sides of the Mississippi.

With such men, led by the wise and holy and far-seeing McKendree, the cause must triumph. In St. Louis and Chicago, Jesse Walker planted Methodism. He died in 1835, a member of the Illinois Conference. James Gwin, in later life, after preaching on Nashville Station and District, was for a long time pastor of the colored congregation of the city. He removed to Mississippi, and from that Conference received the Master's dis-



charge. He was strong and original. Once a junior colleague, observing that he read but little and at the same time had to preach every Sunday to a large and intelligent congregation, talked to him on the subject, remarking that he could not see how he was to sustain himself without reading. "He heard me through," said the junior, "without manifesting the least displeasure, and answered by saying: 'You little fellows cannot learn any thing until somebody else finds it out first and puts it in a book, then you can learn it; but I know it before it goes in a book—I know what they make books out of.' And so he did."

It is time to glance at the progress of the cause in the South-west. On landing at Natchez, in the spring of the year,\* Tobias Gibson bought a horse to replace the one he had sold on the Cumberland when setting out on the long canoe voyage, and explored the settlements as far up as Walnut Hills, near the site of Vicksburg. After visiting and preaching awhile in private houses he organized his first church, according to previous notice. It was at the village of Washington, the seat of territorial government, six miles east of Natchez, in a school-house. Having preached an instructive sermon, he proposed to receive candidates for membership. The missionary sung the hymn of invitation with a melody of voice peculiar to himself, and awaited the result. Randall Gibson came forward and his wife, Henrietta; then came Caleb Worley, a young man of Western Pennsylvania, who had known something of Methodism in the Youghiogheny Valley; next, Mrs. Edna Bullen, sister of Randall Gibson; and next, William Foster and Rachel, his wife; and last came a negro slave and his wife—eight in all.

Randall Gibson was a wealthy and leading man, a kinsman of the preacher. Foster proved to be the model steward, and at his house the first session of the Mississippi Conference was held some years later. They both established family worship and led in public prayers. Randall Gibson was the model class-leader, and the first local preacher licensed. His character was elevated, his influence great and pure, and his ministry extensively useful. All of these few souls, who there entered the ark of Christ's

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\*Our best historian of South-western Methodism, Rev. John G. Jones, says Tobias Gibson arrived in the spring of 1799. Among other proofs, the family Bible shows that the parents of the author—Jonathan Jones and Phæbe Griffing—were married by him in October following.—*MS. History.*

Church, lived to old age, and honored their profession, saved themselves, and helped to save others.

The work was enlarging, his health was failing, help was needed, and Tobias Gibson resolved what to do. If he wrote a letter, it might be miscarried; and if it reached the Conference it would be only a letter from a stranger. He would go himself and plead his cause, and then conduct the new helper to his field. In September, 1802, he took the Natchez trace on horseback alone, and made the four hundred mile trip through the wilderness to attend the Western Conference at Strother's.\* He had not shaken the hand nor seen the face of an itinerant in four years. Asbury embraced him and blessed him, and sent back with him Moses Floyd, a young Georgian, who had been in the ministry three years. The return trip was not so solitary. Next year stronger reasons impelled Tobias Gibson to attend Conference. He felt that his end was approaching, and with great desire he desired to see the Church provided for before he departed. Again he was on the Natchez trace for a longer journey, for the Western Conference met near Cynthiana, Kentucky, and he appeared before his brethren in great feebleness. Asbury put his arms about him and strengthened him. Hezekiah Hariman and Abram Amos returned with him—the former had seen service in Maryland and Tennessee, the latter was a new recruit. The following spring Tobias Gibson finished his course with joy. From Walnut Hills to West Florida the sad news soon spread, and a profound sorrow was on the hearts of the people.

\* Besides the water route, following the eastern tributaries of the Mississippi River to the Father of Waters and floating down to the point of debarkation, there were three land routes—mere horse-paths—opened through the Indian country to Natchez and other settlements on the Lower Mississippi. These were maintained by the Government for mail routes, by treaty stipulations with the Indian tribes. The first began at Nashville, and crossed the Tennessee River at Colbert's ferry, below the Muscle Shoals; thence through the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nation to the Grindstone Ford on Bayou Pierre, ending at Natchez and Fort Adams. The second began at Knoxville, and passed through the Cherokee Nation by way of the Tellico and Tombigbee rivers to Natchez. The third was from the Oconee settlements, in Georgia, through the Creek Nation across the Alabama River in the direction of St. Steven's, on westwardly to Natchez. The traders of the Upper Mississippi River and its tributaries, who brought down their produce in flat-boats, were accustomed to return on foot or horseback by the first route—called the Nashville and Natchez trace—and hence it became best known. (MS. History of Rev. J. G. Jones.)

Tobias Gibson was in the thirty-fifth year of his age. He is represented "as tall and spare, with fair complexion, light hair, and piercing black eyes, and was considered handsome. The expression of his countenance, the cast of his conversation, and his general deportment in private life, were affectionate, but grave and solemn. As one of his converts remarked, 'He seldom smiled, but often wept, especially in his public exercises.'"\* His manners were such as mark true culture of soul as well as of society, and his preaching was instructive and pathetic. "There were but few who placed themselves under his pastoral care," says the well-informed historian of that day, "that did not soon profess faith in Christ. A large proportion of both sexes of the societies which he raised and instructed would lead in prayer when called on in class and prayer meeting. He was a sweet singer, and there was such a general improvement in this respect that the converts under his ministry literally had a new song put into their mouths. His candor was softened by courtesy, and such was his character for piety and charity that a personal contest with him would have been looked upon as discreditable to any man."† Tobias Gibson contracted a matrimonial engagement with one of his flock not long before he was completely prostrated by the insidious disease that terminated his earthly existence. He had received her, with most of her father's family, into the Church soon after he came to the country, and had watched with increasing interest her growth in piety and zeal in the service of God; but the friends of both parties, seeing he was in a hopeless consumption, advised them not to consummate the engagement, to which they reluctantly but judiciously and piously consented. Their last conversation on the subject was said to have been full of the tenderest emotions, but beautified with Christian dignity and enlivened with mutual pledges to meet each other in heaven. This proved to be their final parting on earth. He preached his last sermon on New-year's-day, in 1804, which was made a blessing to many, and retired to the house of a relative to die. The young lady, visiting a friend in another part of the Territory, was taken sick and died about the same time. "And so," says the historian, "their reunion in the heavenly world was much sooner than they anticipated at their painful parting."‡

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\*MS. History of Rev. J. G. Jones. †Ibid. ‡Ibid.



Learner Blackman was sent by William McKendree from the Western Conference of 1804 to take charge of Methodism in Mississippi. It was the first Conference McKendree ever presided over, and he never made a better appointment. Blackman took with him Nathan Barnes, who had concluded a good year's work on the Scioto Circuit. What had been a circuit he developed in 1806, by wise planning and incessant preaching and traveling, into a district with three circuits, having their base on the river, and reaching out, as far as the settlements extended, toward Alabama and Florida—the Natchez Circuit, with Wilkinson on the south and Claibourne on the north, to which the Opelousas Circuit, in South-western Louisiana, was added. The Mississippi District was continued under the presidency of Blackman, in 1807, with the addition of Ouachita (Washita) Circuit, in the northern part of Louisiana. This captain of the Lord's host now held positions on both sides of the river; and by crossing and recrossing the wilderness to the sessions of the Western Conference, and representing the case to Bishop Asbury, he had brought to his help such men as Lasley, Bowman, and Axley, of whose work we shall have more to say.

A session of the Western Conference in September, 1807, at Chillicothe, fifty miles north of the Ohio River, means progress. Asbury reached it from New England by traveling through Schenectady, Geneva, and Tioga—on through Western Pennsylvania—attending camp-meetings and holding ordinations along the way: then entered Kentucky, not by the old route of the Crab Orchard and Cumberland Gap. The scene has changed. He says: "There were thirteen preachers added, and we found an addition of two thousand two hundred members to the Society in these bounds; seven deacons were elected and ordained, and ten elders; two preachers only located; sixty-six were stationed."

Learner Blackman was present, reporting the Mississippi District with five circuits—three on the east and two on the west side of the river, with three hundred and thirty-five white and eighty colored members. He then concluded a horseback journey of sixteen hundred miles to see his parents in New Jersey, and took final leave of them with manly tears. He and they desired a field nearer home, but the Church required his services elsewhere, and to the West he returned and there ended his noble life. Crossing the Ohio, in 1815, he was drowned.

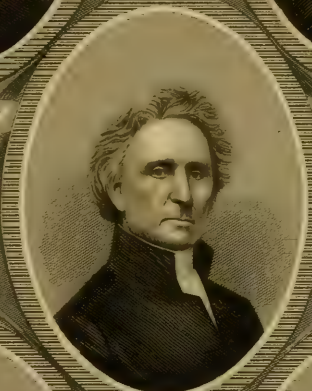
Eleven delegates were chosen to represent Western Methodism in the General Conference of 1808, to meet at Baltimore. Of course William McKendree led the delegation. He returned to the East after eight years of memorable work. He had found the Western Conference with one district and left it with five; with two thousand three hundred and seven white members, and one hundred and seventy-seven colored, and left it with fifteen thousand two hundred and two white members, and seven hundred and ninety-five colored. Let us consider this Christian chieftain, as represented by those who knew him well. He led a band of tried men. It was not his plan to say "Go," but "Come;" and a more heroic band never lived than those who followed the standard borne in triumph by William McKendree. He was mighty in the Scriptures, and had the anointing of the Spirit. He had obeyed well, and he governed well. As a man of order, he was faultless: every thing was in its place, and all things were done at the proper time. There was no coldness, coarseness, or selfishness about him. Without effort, he found his way to the confidence and esteem of every one, old and young, black and white, rich and poor. He was five feet ten inches in height, weighing about one hundred and sixty pounds. He had fair skin, dark hair, and blue eyes that kindled when he spoke. When in his prime, his form was a model, possessing extraordinary action and great physical strength. His features, taken as a whole, were decidedly good; his bearing was modest, yet most impressive. "When he appeared on a camp-ground," says an old comrade, "he naturally took command: all yielded him deference." "His perceptive organs were perfect. He saw every thing that came in sight—nothing passed him unnoticed. His mind had no dark surfaces or blunt edges. His intellect was bright, and his thoughts diamond-pointed. He never said foolish things—never weak, never even common things." All his time and all his powers were consecrated to God.



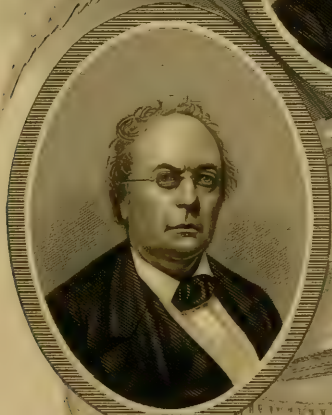
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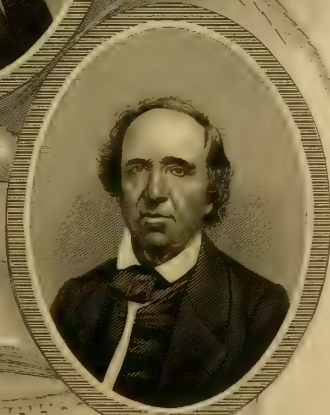
John Emory



Joshua Soule



Thomas Morris



James Wadsworth





## CHAPTER XXXIV.

General Conferences of 1804 and 1808—Demand for a Delegated Body—Camp-meetings in the East—Prosperity—Bishop Whatcoat's Death—McKendree Elected—Joshua Soule Brings in a Plan for a Delegated General Conference: Its Defeat; Its Adoption—Death of Bishop Coke; His Burial at Sea.

A FEELING of insecurity with regard to Church order, united with a growing inconvenience and inequality in the attendance upon General Conference, suggested a change in the composition and powers of that body. Though since 1800 limited to the elders, whenever it met it had absolute authority, and by the vote of a bare majority could at any time change the doctrines or the economy of the Church.

It was impossible for the distant Conferences to be present in full force, and already they had begun to appoint delegates to represent them. The General Conference meeting in Baltimore, the controlling power was necessarily placed in the hands of the elders in the central parts. There is no list of preachers in attendance until 1804, when it appears that of one hundred and eight present, thirty-seven are from Philadelphia Conference, and thirty from Baltimore; giving these two Conferences almost two-thirds of the body.\*

In 1800 a proposition that there should be a delegated General Conference was promptly negatived. It was negatived in 1804, with the understanding that the subject might be considered by the Annual Conferences and brought, with matured suggestions, before the next General Conference. Too much legislation, hasty and radical measures, and unequal representation, might thus be avoided, and the polity and doctrinal integrity of the Church be secured, under constitutional provisions.

The General Conference of 1804 met at a time of religious prosperity. The year before had added over seventeen thousand members—a larger number than any previous year had witnessed. Camp-meetings and revivals of great power prevailed,

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\* Number of elders present from the several Annual Conferences, in the General Conference of 1804: From the Western Conference, 3; South Carolina Conference, 5; Virginia Conference, 17; Baltimore Conference, 30; Philadelphia Conference, 37; New York Conference, 12; New England Conference, 4. Total 108. Bishops, 3. Total of elders and bishops, 111.

and the historian of the time says "our ministers and people throughout the Connection were uncommonly devoted to God, and much engaged to promote his cause." The Journal shows that the Discipline was examined, paragraph by paragraph, from beginning to end. Amendments were suggested, and a vote was taken on each section. A rule was adopted that the bishops should allow the Annual Conferences to sit a week at least, and that they should not permit any preacher to remain in the same station or circuit more than two years successively.

The year before he was made presiding elder McKendree was on four circuits, serving each one quarter. Annual change was the rule, but some preachers had been appointed to the same place for three years, and the disposition for extended accomodation was growing. This rule was a relief to the bishops; for if preachers are to be moved the law must keep them movable. At this Conference it was ordered to print the Discipline in two parts—the first to be called the spiritual, and the second the temporal part, and "that the first part of the Discipline should be published alone, for the benefit of the black people in the South who are members of our Society and taught to read."

The hard rule until this time was that if any member married with an unawakened person, he or she should be expelled from the Church; but it was now modified: instead of being expelled the offender was "put back on trial." An incident, the like of which occurred in apostolic times if we may judge from Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, doubtless helped to bring about this modification. A godly woman having entered into matrimonial alliance contrary to the canon was on trial for the same. She could not repent of the act, and the sanctifying effect of her example and influence upon the miserable sinner that her husband had been was known and read of all the community. While the Society was in a dilemma about executing the law the husband stood without, and sent in a message that if he might be allowed to do so he would join the Church with his wife. And so the matter ended.

The *quadrennium* from 1803 to 1807 was remarkable for revivals in the East, as the former four years had been in the West. Asbury's journal has this reckoning and this longing: "Our total for the year 1803 is 104,070 members. In 1771 there were about 300 Methodists in New York, 250 in Philadelphia, and a



few in New Jersey. I then longed for 100,000; now I want 200,000 – nay, thousands upon thousands.” Some extracts from Lee’s History will show the spirit of those times:

The Lord was pleased to favor the people in Georgia in 1803 with an uncommon prosperous time in religion, and many souls were brought to God at public and at private meetings. At the quarterly-meetings on Broad River and in Appalachie circuits there were about thirty or forty converted at each place. The quarterly-meeting at Harris’s Chapel, in Washington county, was remarkably favored with the presence of the Lord. Conversions were clear and powerful, and not many short of one hundred professed converting grace at that time.

There was a general camp-meeting in Warren county. The ground was opened in an oblong form, having the meeting-house in the middle. On the second day souls were converted to God, and the work spread through the assembly. It was thought that as many as one hundred souls were converted. Indeed, Georgia has been a great place for religion from that day to this, and old professors have generally been very lively in religion.

In South Carolina religion gained ground, and in many places it might be said to be all in a flame.

In North Carolina the work of the Lord spread greatly, and was known both among saints and sinners. A short account of the camp-meetings in the lower part of that State says: “At the first camp-meeting I suppose there were twenty-seven converted; several at the second and third, about ten at the fourth, and about sixty-seven at the last.”

There was a gracious reformation and many converted in the city of Middletown, Connecticut, in the course of the summer and fall of the year. A number of the inhabitants went from the city by water down the river to what they called a kind of field-meeting, where the work began, and several were awakened, and converted as they returned home. From that time the work revived.

In the latter part of the summer (1804) there was a camp-meeting held low down in Virginia, near the town of Suffolk, where the power and presence of God were wonderfully displayed. The meeting began on Friday, and continued with but little intermission until Monday night, in which time it was thought that three or four hundred persons were converted to God. The accounts from that meeting appear to be incredible to those who were not present, but those who were eye and ear witnesses think it to be too great to be sufficiently described.

During this year Stith Mead labored among the people of Bedford, Amherst, and Campbell counties, and a few other places, where the Lord greatly owned his labors in the gospel. He gives an account of upward of eleven hundred who were converted at the meetings where he was, in the course of six months. It appeared as if the kingdoms of this world would soon become the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ. These camp-meetings were the first that had ever been held in that part of Virginia. Lynchburg greatly shared in this revival.

The years 1805 and 1806 were prosperous, and the work of God was carried on in many places in an uncommon manner, both in the conversion and sanctification of souls. “Most of the United States,” says Lee, “were favored with the awakening

and converting grace of God. The people were oftentimes awakened and brought to the knowledge of God in the course of the same day. Some who came to meeting in the forenoon quite careless and wicked have gone away before night happy in God. I have seen some fall beneath the power of God as if they were struck dead, and then lie helpless and speechless for a short space, while their friends have prayed for them, and at last they sprung up of a sudden, and with a loud voice gave praise to God in that he had forgiven their sins."\* Methodism was at its true calling—acting upon the masses, reaching the multitude with the gospel. It became common to begin quarterly-meetings on Friday, and continue them until Sunday night or Monday forenoon, and for hundreds of people to attend them in wagons, and carts, and with tents, and to lodge in the woods by the meeting-houses while the meeting lasted. Many old Christians were renewed in love, and backsliders were reclaimed. It was customary to hear of ten or twenty souls being converted where the people met to hear a sermon or to hold a prayer-meeting, and of fifty or a hundred souls being converted at a quarterly or a camp meeting. While sinners were coming home to God, Christians were advancing in the divine life, and many young preachers were raised up to the help of the Lord against the mighty.†

On the Eastern Shore of Maryland, according to credible report, more than one thousand persons were converted at a camp-meeting which lasted five days and nights.

The peninsula produced some of the strongest men of Methodism: Shadrack Bostwick, Caleb Boyer, William Beauchamp, Ezekiel Cooper, Hope Hull, William Phœbus, Stephen Martindale, Lawrence McCombs, Lawrence Lawrenson, John Emory, John Broadhead, George Pickering, and many others.

The necrology of these times is rich in the trophies of faith. Wilson Lee died in October, 1804. He had labored in the most refined Eastern stations and in the roughest Western missions, for twenty years. A few months before he died he said to a friend: "I have given up the world, I have given up the Church, I have given up all."

William Ormond died of yellow fever, declaring with his latest breath, "Peace, peace, victory, victory; complete victory!" To

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\* Lee's History of Methodism. † Ibid.

a friend he wrote, June 30, 1803: "I expect to continue upon my station, for it appears I cannot well leave it at this time. I may as well die with the fever as with any other affliction, and there is as direct a passage from Norfolk to heaven as from any other part of the globe. I have no widow to weep over my lifeless body, no babes to mourn for a father; and I find this world is a dangerous and troublesome place." He left a legacy to the Conference, and another to build a house for God in the neighborhood of his nativity.

About the same time, in the North, fell David Brown, a native of Ireland. The Minutes say: "He had a peculiar excellency in reproof. The edge of it was so keen and so tempered as to give at the time rather pleasure than pain, yet so directed as to produce with unerring certainty its effect; and generally after his departure his supposed pleasantry was first perceived to have had a serious meaning; but he lost no love by his reproofs. Discord fled before him, for the God of peace was with him, and a united harmony brooded over the face of the circuit."

Nicholas Watters died in Charleston of yellow fever, where James King had died of the same disease seven years before. He was one of seven brothers who were among the first to embrace Methodism in Maryland; the youngest of whom was the first American Methodist itinerant. Henry Willis—one of the best of the original thirteen elders, finished his course; and George Dougherty, a gifted and faithful preacher. Like Willis, he often sunk and rose again in bodily strength, and took advantage of every respite to renew pulpit and pastoral labor. The Minutes say: "Our immortal Dougherty was declining for two years, but his fortitude caused him to travel to the last of life. He survived and re-survived. His last public act was to attend the Annual Conference in Sparta, Georgia, January, 1807. Here he brought forward a resolution, 'that if any preacher should desert his station through fear in time of sickness or danger, the Conference should never employ that man again.' He, with amazing argument and energy, carried his cause, like a dying general in victory. He spoke of eternity with sweet composure, and manifested an indescribable assemblage of confidence, love, and hope, while he said, 'The goodness and love of God to me are great and marvelous as I go down the dreadful declivity of death.'"



Bennett Kendrick was put on the Camden District to supply Dougherty's place, and died thirteen days after him. "His excellences as a preacher were known best to citizens, friends, and brethren in Portsmouth, Wilmington, Charleston, and Columbia; and the poor Africans repeat his name and his death with tears. He was a willing servant to slaves for the sake of Christ."

The reproach that the Protestant clergy desert their flocks in epidemics, and leave the Romish priesthood to stand by the people in times of danger, has often been disproved by Methodist preachers in the cities of the Gulf and Atlantic coasts.

Bishop Whatcoat died at the house of Governor Bassett, Delaware, in 1806. The brief record is: "Born in 1736; converted Sept. 3, 1758; sanctified March 28, 1761; began to preach in 1769; came to America in 1784; consecrated bishop in 1800; died at Dover, Delaware, July 5, 1806." He was one of the two elders who came with Bishop Coke to organize Episcopal Methodism, and used his office well. One day in Kent county he "preached in the morning and baptized thirty-six children, and in the afternoon, and baptized fifty more." We have seen him on his first episcopal tour. On returning to the place of setting out he wrote: "Our circuit through the continent since we left Baltimore, 21st of May, 1800, is about 4,184 miles. We had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that pure and undefiled religion is spreading in a general way; in some places it is extraordinary." The next year he explored and preached from Boston to Savannah. One expression betrays his itinerant habit and his conscientious accuracy. The distance between places is measured by "the way I came." He winds up his second continental tour: "From Camden to Petersburg, the way I traveled, is about 585 miles. I visited several societies, preached to the people, and came to Baltimore the 27th of March, 322 miles from Petersburg, the way I came. In my course through the continent since I left Baltimore the 11th of last April, it is about 3,707 miles, in the 66th year of my age." Next he touched the extreme eastern and western points of American Methodism, preaching edifying sermons, ordaining deacons and elders in every Conference, and concluded another tour of so many thousand miles, "the way I came." His fifth and last grand round is thus recorded: "Notwithstanding my infirm state of body, through the blessing of God I have been able to travel 3,416 miles the last

twelve months, stopping one-fourth of the time at different places by the way." The Minutes say: "Who ever saw him trifling or light? Who ever heard him speak evil of any person? Nay, who ever heard him speak an idle word? Dead to envy, pride, and praise. Sober, without sadness; cheerful, without levity; careful, without covetousness; and decent, without pride."

At the place of his tomb—Wesley Chapel, Dover—his surviving colleague bore a loving and strong testimony to the worth of one whom he "had known from his own age of fourteen years." All mourned for him whose chief and priceless contribution to the Church had been faithful service and holy example, gentleness and peace, sweetness and light.\*

The General Conference of 1808 met in Baltimore, with one hundred and twenty-nine members as reported in the Minutes. Of these, Philadelphia had thirty-two and Baltimore thirty-one—nearly a majority of the body. This, like every General Conference before it, was a body with conventional powers. The whole Discipline was open to revision by a majority vote. It had become evident that there must be a delegated General Conference, working under a constitution. A committee of fourteen—two from each of the seven Annual Conferences—was appointed to draw up a plan. This committee met, and detailed three of their number as a sub-committee, viz.: Ezekiel Cooper, of the New York; Philip Bruce, of the Virginia; and Joshua Soule, of the New England Conference. This sub-committee agreed that each should make out a draught, and separated. When they met Cooper and Soule had theirs, but Bruce had not put pen to paper. The words, as they now stand in the Discipline, were in Joshua Soule's paper—providing for a general itinerant superintendency. Cooper's ran thus: "The General Conference shall not do away with episcopacy, nor reduce our ministry to a presbyterial parity." The issue was made there. Finally, Bruce voted with Soule, and his plan was submitted to the committee

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\* Not to lose sight of Thomas Vasey: Having once put on gown and bands, he could not put them off. He consented to receive reordination at the hands of Bishop White; returned to England; obtained a curacy in the Establishment; went back to his first love, and got employment from Wesley at City Road and in the Leed's band-meetings; and died at a good old age. It would be interesting to know what *spiritual* benefits or grace flowed to him along a *material* line of tactual succession, supposing such an unbroken conductor, by laying on of hands, to exist.

of fourteen, and adopted without change, and by it submitted to the Conference. The constitution—for so we may call it—was debated, and laid on the table for three days. Ezekiel Cooper labored hard to have seven bishops—one for each Annual Conference. He was a master of debate, and the motion was his, seconded by Joshua Wells of the Baltimore Conference, “to postpone the present question to make room for the consideration of a new resolution as preparatory to the minds of the brethren to determine on the present subject.”

Cooper and others favored an elective presiding eldership, and this opportunity was considered a very favorable one for pushing a measure that had been often defeated mainly by those who now sought a delegated General Conference.

The motion to postpone prevailed, and they immediately introduced a resolution that “each Annual Conference respectively, without debate, shall annually choose by ballot its own presiding elders.” This question was debated for three days, and was lost by a vote of fifty-two yeas, and seventy-three nays. The report recommending a delegated body was then voted upon and lost, fifty-seven being for, and sixty-four against.

As the New York, New England, South Carolina, and Western Conferences had petitioned for this plan, and as it was lost by the votes principally of Philadelphia and Baltimore, much feeling was excited. The New England delegates asked leave of absence, stating that they were not disposed to make any faction, but they considered their presence useless. The Western delegates were in no pleasant mood. “Burke’s brow gathered a solemn frown; Sale and others looked sad; as for poor Lakin, he wept like a child.”\* Jesse Lee, who from the beginning favored a delegated body, endangered the whole scheme by persistent objection to an unimportant point. He disliked the election of delegates; wished them indicated by seniority, to prevent electioneering. The author of the plan met this by proposing to amend the part providing for the appointment of delegates by leaving it to the Annual Conferences to appoint by seniority or by ballot. The brethren of the minority consented to remain in the city until some private interviews could be held. A number of the Philadelphia and Baltimore members agreed to reconsider and to vote with them; and subsequently the report was taken

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\* Henry Smith’s Recollections of an Itinerant.



up and acted on, item by item, and then as a whole the plan for a delegated General Conference was adopted with great unanimity.\*

It was necessary to "strengthen the episcopacy" by the election of one or more superintendents; and after a motion to elect seven bishops, and another to elect two, had failed by a strong vote, it was resolved almost unanimously to elect and consecrate one. The Conference proceeded to vote by ballot, one hundred and twenty-eight members present and voting. William McKendree received ninety-five votes, and was declared elected; and on the 18th of May he was consecrated, in Light Street Church, by Bishop Asbury, assisted by four elders.

When the Western presiding elder entered the General Conference, he had been so long and so far from the central part of the Church his old friends were not prepared to appreciate the improvement he had made, while to the younger members of the body he was almost unknown, even by name. Having been appointed to preach at Light Street Church on the Sabbath before Conference, McKendree complied, and the unction of the Holy One was upon the preacher and the word. The people magnified the grace of God in him, saying in their hearts, "This is the man whom God delights to honor." Bishop Asbury, who was present, was heard to say that the sermon would make him

\* The following is a copy of an important part of the plan:

The General Conference shall have full powers to make rules and regulations for our Church, under the following limitations and restrictions:

1. The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.

2. They shall not allow of more than one representative for every five members of the Annual Conference, nor allow of a less number than one for every seven.

3. They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government so as to do away episcopacy or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency.

4. They shall not revoke or change the General Rules of the United Societies.

5. They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers of trial by a committee, and of an appeal; neither shall they do away the privileges of our members of trial before the Society, or by a committee, and of an appeal.

6. They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, or of the Charter Fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children. Provided, nevertheless, that upon the joint recommendation of all the Annual Conferences then a majority of two-thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions.

a bishop. He was the first native American elected to that office in the Methodist Church, and was fifty-one years of age.

The Conference of 1808 dates an era in Episcopal Methodism. Asbury rejoiced over the provision for stability in the Church and "the electing dear Brother McKendree," with this good reason: "Since the burden is now borne by two pairs of shoulders instead of one—the care is cast upon two hearts and heads."

Bishop Coke was present at the General Conference of 1804, and soon after took final leave. He was bringing out his Commentary on the Bible, and carrying on missions in the West Indies, Wales, Ireland, and Africa. Herein lies his greatness: he was in advance of the Church on its greatest duty—to spread the gospel in the regions beyond. He devoted himself to begging funds, as well as administering them, in this behalf, and was the largest giver to the cause; and so carefully, as well as honestly, was this abundance administered by him that there was never occasion for blame. The following is an instance of his perseverance and success. Calling on the captain of a man-of-war one day, he pleaded the cause of the negroes so powerfully that he obtained a much larger sum than he had expected; this he gratefully received and retired. The captain, who knew nothing of Dr. Coke, happened to call on a gentleman to whom the Doctor had made several successful applications in behalf of the missions. After some conversation, "Pray, sir," said the captain, "do you know any thing of a little fellow who calls himself Dr. Coke, who is going about begging money for missionaries to be sent among the slaves?" "I know him well," was the reply. "He seems," rejoined the captain, "to be a heavenly-minded little devil; he coaxed me out of two guineas this morning."

Returning from his ninth and last voyage to America, he renewed the business of planning missions and soliciting aid for their support. With this object in view he visited Bristol and called on a lady who was at once rich, generous, and pious. With a countenance beaming with generosity she subscribed one hundred guineas. As it was not convenient for her to pay the amount at that time, she requested him to call on her at her residence in Wiltshire. On seeing the amount of her subscription, the Doctor found it difficult to express his gratitude. When he called on her at Bradford, instead of repining at her former liberality,

she doubled the amount and gave him two hundred guineas. From these interviews an acquaintance began which led to their marriage in April, 1805.

This lady was the only surviving child of a gentleman who had bequeathed to her an ample fortune; and being interested in the prosperity of missions, she was desirous of promoting the cause of God by supporting them. Having married this estimable and wealthy lady—Miss Penelope Goulding Smith—Dr. Coke addressed a circular to his American brethren in June, 1805, announcing his marriage, and proposing to reside permanently with them “on the express condition that the seven Conferences should be divided betwixt us [Bishop Asbury and himself], three and four, and four and three, each of us changing our division annually; and that this plan, at all events, should continue permanent and unalterable during both our lives.”

The Conferences—some sharply, others mildly but firmly—declined a proposition which ignored the position and claims of Bishop Whatcoat, who was greatly and justly loved, and who was then actively engaged in the duties of his office; and which involved other consequences not desirable.

A more serious affair had to be cleared up by Bishop Coke, which brought a long explanatory letter to the Conference of 1808. He and Bishop White had been indulging in a little private negotiation for a union of the Methodist Episcopal and the Protestant Episcopal Churches, as far back as 1791. Of course the project fell through; but a letter of Coke's, written in honor and confidence to White on the matter, after lying still for years, had been published. While this document caused “much un-circumcised rejoicing” in one camp, it raised indignation in the other. He declares to the General Conference, after giving the history of the affair: “I thought (perhaps erroneously, and *I believe so now*) that our field of action would have been exceedingly enlarged by that junction, and that myriads would have attended our ministry in consequence of it who were at that time prejudiced against us. All these things unitedly considered led me to write the letter, and meet Bishop White and Dr. Magaw in Philadelphia.” He avers: “I never did apply to the general convention, or any other convention, for reconsecration. I never intended that either Bishop Asbury or myself should give up our episcopal office if the junction were to take place;” and that



"I have no doubt but my consecration of Bishop Asbury was perfectly valid." He held that the orders of all ordained Methodist preachers were perfectly valid, and that nothing he had written or done in the whole business was contrary to this position or compromised the honor and integrity of Methodism. It was to be a *union*, where both parties made concessions and got advantages, but neither was absorbed.

Coke had been alarmed at the O'Kelley schism, which was then rising; he had been listening to the chief and his friends, and took in their exaggerations of evil. Moreover, there was as yet no General Conference established as a center of power and bond of union for Episcopal Methodism. In this state of things he verily thought each Church could bring to the other some element of strength in their day of weakness.

The General Conference accepted his apology, and yielded gracefully to a request from the English brethren that he should remain with them, where he was greatly useful. The worst, the inexcusable part of this pragmatism is that Asbury was at his side when Coke wrote the letter, and was not taken into his confidence. His excuse was that he knew his colleague would not then entertain the thought, and he wished to get things in train by the coming General Conference of 1792.

Dr. Coke was very enterprising. In 1799 he had the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury considering another scheme of union proposed by himself, to arrest the tendency to "universal separation from the Establishment," which was evident among the Wesleyans of Great Britain. In a long letter he informs his lordship:

A very considerable part of our Society have imbibed a deep prejudice against receiving the Lord's Supper from the hands of immoral clergymen. The word immoral they consider in a very extensive sense, as including all those who frequent card-tables, balls, horse-racing, theaters, and other places of fashionable amusement. I have found it in vain to urge to them that the validity of the ordinance does not depend upon the piety, or even the morality, of the minister; all my arguments have had no effect. . . . I am inclined to think that if a given number of our leading preachers, proposed by our General Conference, were to be ordained, and permitted to travel through our Connection, to administer the sacraments to those Societies who have been thus prejudiced as above, every difficulty would be removed.

After some weeks of incubation upon this stone egg the archbishop, with due apology for delay, says: "I now proceed to in-

form you of my sentiments, and those of the bishops with whom I have communicated on the subject of your letter, after the fullest and most deliberate consideration of its contents." And the substance is: "That persons of tender consciences, who have scruples in respect to any points of religious doctrine or discipline, should be allowed all reasonable indulgence, we hold to be just and proper; but that a scruple avowed to be founded in a presumption that all the regularly ordained clergy of the Church of England are immoral, should be given way to"—well, they did not see their way clear! All this, let it be remembered, in England and in America, was on the Doctor's own motion and responsibility; nobody had any hand in it but himself.\*

Thomas Coke's foibles must not be allowed to offset, or even to obscure, his excellences. Without chagrin he accepted the rejection of exceptional proposals to serve the American churches, and was ready with other offers. He took reproof kindly. Often blundering impetuously, he did not stint at apology. His "conscience could not be pacified" without writing "a penitential letter" to Jarratt for the way he had spoken of him in his journal as a slave-holder. If one ill-devised plan fell through, his restless activity for doing good tried another. He never soured, never despaired; and his love for his brethren never failed. The English Methodists, on his return to them, treated him coldly because they thought him too American; and his American brethren suspected him as too English; but he resented neither, and only sought to serve both in the Lord. On foreign mission stations, in the presence of the heathen where so vast a work is to be done for Christ, denominational differences are felt the least; the lines that divide the little band of Christian workers almost fade away. This missionary spirit and aspect had mastered Thomas Coke, and he desired to see a union of forces against the massed powers of sin and Satan, at any reasonable sacrifice and concession. If his advances were repelled, or his confidence was betrayed, he did not cease to trust his fellow-men, and could say: "In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands have I done this." More impulsive than calculating, he was too earnest for his cause to be conservative of his reputation. He bore the expenses as well as the perils of endless voyages and journeys in the service of the Church, and gave an im-

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\* Life of Coke, by Drew, pages 290-295.

pulse to domestic and foreign missions which is felt to this day. It has been truly stated that for many years he "stooped to the very drudgery of charity, and gratuitously pleaded the cause of a perishing world from door to door."

Beginning with Nova Scotia, and raising his first collection of \$150 in the Baltimore Conference of 1784 for the support of its missionaries, he reached even to Gibraltar. Nor did he end there. In 1811, under his appeals, Warren, Haley, Reyner, and Hurst volunteered to undertake a mission to the continent of Africa, and arrived safely after a passage of more than thirteen months. To carry this design into immediate operation Coke advanced £600 (about \$2,666) from his own personal property.

In 1813, having gathered all the information necessary for undertaking a mission to India, and fixed upon Ceylon as the best point for beginning, Coke appeared before the British Conference, in his sixty-sixth year, and asked their approval. He stated at large the providential concurrence of circumstances which at the time rendered a mission to the East feasible. At the same time he introduced to the Conference seven preachers who had volunteered to accompany him to the regions beyond. Some thought the time had not yet come for so bold and costly an enterprise; but he pleaded for it, and declared it would break his heart if he were denied. To silence effectually whatever opposition might be made from pecuniary considerations, he offered to bear the whole expense of the outfit from his own private property, to the amount of £6,000 (about \$26,660), if that sum should be found necessary.

Having completed the necessary preparations, on the 10th of December they left London for Portsmouth, to embark. Their ship doubled the Cape of Good Hope late in April. The missionaries were diligent in studies, preparatory to their future work, and frequent and fervent in devotions. On retiring to rest May 2, their leader "took his fellow-missionaries by the hand, and in his usual manner commended them to God." Next morning he was found "stretched upon his cabin-floor, lifeless and cold." It is supposed that he died of apoplexy. The wish, expressed in his will, that his body might be buried by the side of beloved dust at Brecon, could not be carried out. The intense heat made it necessary that the funeral should take place on the evening of the same day.



The ship's carpenter made a large, thick deal coffin, with holes in the bottom, that the air might not prevent its sinking. In this coffin the body was decently laid, and four cannon-balls, inclosed in canvas bags, were introduced—two at the head and two at the feet of the corpse. At five o'clock the coffin was carried on deck and laid on the leeward gangway. The awning was spread, and the tolling of the ship's bell called the passengers and crew together. One of the missionaries read the funeral-service, and then, in solemn silence, the body of the first Methodist bishop was consigned to its grave in the middle of the Indian Ocean, to be seen no more till "the sea shall give up the dead which are in it."

The rest of the company reached the place of their destination in safety, and commenced their labors under favorable circumstances; and the success which has since attended this mission proves that it was undertaken and prosecuted under the Divine sanction. It was the beginning of the vast foreign missionary work that has made Wesleyan Methodism famous in all lands.

At the time of Coke's death Asbury, wheezing and groaning with asthma, with his feet in poultices, and "sitting in my little covered wagon, into which they lifted me," was clambering over the mountains of Western Pennsylvania, visiting, preaching, and holding Conferences. When the news of the sad event reached him he wrote in his journal: "Thomas Coke, of the third branch of Oxonian Methodists: as a minister of Christ, in zeal, in labors, and in services, the greatest man of the last century."

## CHAPTER XXXV.

Extending the Field in Illinois and Missouri—Winans—Negro Missions—Olin—McKendree's New Method of Presiding—Asbury Takes Final Leave of the Conferences: State of the Western Field on his Departure—Asbury's Death.

THE members of the General Conference of 1808 closed their memorable session with remarkable unanimity and affection, and returned to their respective fields with fresh zeal and hope, feeling that they had done their duty to God and the Church; and the whole Connection seemed to enjoy renewed vigor. The two Bishops separated. Asbury, with Henry Boehm as his traveling companion, started through Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Kentucky, to the first Conference for the year, to be held in Tennessee; while McKendree went through Western Virginia and Illinois, and crossing the Mississippi River above its junction with the Missouri, joined his old friend Jesse Walker in holding a camp-meeting, in July; and pushing still farther west, crossing the Missouri River one hundred miles above its mouth, they held another camp-meeting at Big Spring, in August. This was the frontier "where," he says in his diary, "until lately the Methodists were unknown—it being under the Spanish and papal governments until transferred to us by the French. Last year we formed a circuit here."

On the way to the farthest west he attended an Illinois camp-meeting where he had preached the year before. The approach was picturesque: "Crossing the Ohio we left Kentucky, and took four days' provision for man and beast, and struck into the wilderness. Lying out was no hardship, but the water was extremely bad, and the flies intolerable. Some had attempted to go through the prairies, but had turned back, and advised us not to try it; but we resolved to go, trusting the Lord. On the third day the flies afflicted us sorely, when a kind Providence sent a strong breeze and blew them all away. After twelve hours a shower of rain succeeded, and blessed man and beast with water to drink. On Saturday morning, as we drew near to the encampment, about thirty of the neighbors fell in with us. We rode two deep, and a number of excellent singers went in front. We were all glad, and as we moved they sung delightfully, 'with the spirit and with the understanding;' and as we approached the

congregation met us with open arms, and welcomed us in the name of the Lord. The Lord was in our midst."

On the return he attended another camp-meeting in the territory. "The people received us as angels of God, and the Lord blessed us with many conversions. On Monday as the sun rose I preached, and then started for Kentucky. A Chickamauga Indian who got converted when I was here last year, stood at a distance and looked on until he could refrain no longer, then rushed through the crowd, caught me around the neck, and cried aloud, saying, 'I see your face no more!' We rode forty-five miles, lodged in the wilderness, and rested in peace."

Late in September he rejoined Bishop Asbury at the Western Conference, which began October 1, at Liberty Hill, near Nashville. The Conference was held at a camp-meeting, the preachers lodging on the encampment, while the Bishops, in view of Bishop Asbury's feeble health, staid at the residence of Green Hill, the same at whose North Carolina home the first Annual Conference was held in 1785. "We sat," says the senior, "six hours a day, stationed eighty-three preachers, and all was peace. On Friday the sacrament was administered, and we hope there were souls converted, and strengthened, and sanctified."

Seventeen preachers were admitted on trial, among them William Winans. He was born in West Pennsylvania, 1788. His childhood and youth were subjected to a severe and rugged discipline. "The poverty of a widowed mother rendered it needful that he should at an early age labor for his own support and that of the other members of her family. He was thus employed in the iron foundries of his neighborhood, where association exposed him to every form of vice. When about sixteen years of age his family removed to the State of Ohio. He was brought to see his sin and deplore it, and joined the Church, and after months of earnest prayer found the forgiveness of sins, and received the witness of the Spirit to his adoption. At a night-meeting while leading in prayer, he found the pearl of great price, and from this period dated his conversion to God. He was shortly after appointed class-leader, then licensed to exhort." Having exercised his gifts as an exhorter for one year, he was licensed to preach, and recommended to Conference. He was appointed to the old Limestone Circuit, as junior preacher: the next year to Vincennes Circuit, which included all the settle-



ments on the Wabash and White rivers, from the Indiana line to the Ohio River. He found a small society of forty-three members which Jesse Walker had organized at Vincennes the year before, and returned to the next Conference one hundred and twenty-five. In August, 1810, while young Winans was on this circuit, occurred the historic interview between Tecumseh, a Shawnee chief, and General Harrison, who was Governor of the Territory. Dissatisfied with a late treaty between the Governor and the Miami Indians, by which certain lands on the Wabash were ceded to the Government, Tecumseh sought the abrogation of the treaty. The interview took place in a grove of trees standing a short distance from the Governor's house, the Indian chief having objected to the conference being held on the portico, as proposed. At one point in the negotiations fears were entertained that the meeting would end in a bloody massacre. Amid the excitement that such an occasion would produce, the Methodist preacher evinced characteristic coolness and courage. Unwilling, if his services were needed, to be only a silent spectator, he ran to the house of the Governor, and obtaining a gun posted himself at the door as the guard of the family. To the self-possession and alertness of young Winans, no less than to the calm bearing of the Governor (whose eye quailed not during the menacing demonstrations of Tecumseh), may be attributed the peaceful termination of the interview.

In the fall transfers were wanted for the Mississippi country, and William Winans, with Sela Paine, took the Natchez trace for that region of the Church and country to be henceforth associated with his development, his labors, and his death, and there we shall meet him again.

The journal of Asbury on the road says: "Prospects in Missouri are great. Bishop McKendree has magnified his office, and penetrated farther to the West than I have, already. From the Western Conference we have traveled rapidly, chiefly together. We hope to strike off a thousand or twelve hundred miles before the South Carolina Conference."

The diary of McKendree shows that, in company with his senior, he started from Liberty Hill the day after the Conference rose, preached in many places, attended two camp-meetings, and then went on to Charleston, where he remained two weeks, preaching in the different churches.

They move on from Charleston, through Augusta, to the camp-ground in Green county, Georgia, where the Conference is held the last days of the year. Asbury's journal gives the lights and the shadows:

Dec. 18, 1808.—I preached in Augusta. My flesh sinks under labor. We are riding in a poor thirty dollar chaise, in partnership, two bishops of us; but it must be confessed it tallies well with the weight of our purses. What bishops! Well; but we hear great news, and we have great times, and each Western, Southern, and the Virginia Conference will have one thousand souls truly converted to God; and is not this an equivalent for a light purse? And are we not well paid for starving and toil? Yes, glory be to God!

Sabbath 25.—Christmas-day. We opened our Conference on Monday. Between sixty and seventy men were present, all of one spirit. We appointed three missionaries—one for Tombigbee; one for Ashley and Savannah, and the country between; and one to labor between Santee and Cooper rivers. Increase within the bounds of this Conference three thousand and eighty-eight. Preaching, and exhortations, and singing, and prayer—we had all these without intermission on the camp-ground, and we have reasons to believe that many souls will be converted. The number of traveling and local preachers present is about three hundred. There are people here with their tents who have come one hundred and fifty miles. The prospects of doing good are glorious.

Three missionaries! Matthew P. Sturdevant enters the Tombigbee country, and Alabama Methodism begins its record. The other two are to the negro slaves in South Carolina.

The South Carolina Conference then began what was kept up for half a century—sending a class of good preachers to evangelize the slaves. In many cases they were superior men, who devoted themselves to what the world esteemed an inferior work. J. H. Mellard was the missionary on Savannah River, and James E. Glenn on the Santee. Twelve years later a young man from Vermont, who had graduated at Middlebury College with a shattered constitution and unsettled religious principles, sought the South for health and employment. James E. Glenn received him to his home at Cokesbury, and as one of the trustees of the village academy secured him a position. Though born in the North, he was converted and developed in the South; became the first President of Randolph Macon College, Virginia, and died in the same position at Wesleyan University, Connecticut; and in the opinion of many competent judges was the ablest preacher who has appeared in American Methodism. No man had more influence in shaping Stephen Olin's early Southern life, and in giving it "an unlooked-for turn," than James E. Glenn.

A glance at the men and their distribution will show that the Conference holding the extreme Southern position is strong, and laying a foundation for the future.

Lovick Pierce is presiding elder of the Oconee District, Britton Capel of the Ogeechee, Lewis Myers of the Saleuda, Daniel Asbury of the Catawba, and Jonathan Jackson of the Camden District. James Jenkins, Hilliard Judge, Samuel Dunwoody, William Gassaway, William M. Kennedy, James Russell, Joseph Tarpley, are among the laborers cultivating this portion of the vineyard; and this year sixteen recruits are added, among them William Capers, Anthony Senter, and Robert L. Kennon.

Continuing their route, in partnership, the two itinerant general superintendents visited Wilmington, Newbern, and Washington, and reached Tarboro, North Carolina, on the last day of January. The Virginia Conference began there the next day. Bishop McKendree was now among his old acquaintances, preached admirably, and ordained the elders. Bishop Asbury says: "We had eighty-four preachers present; sixty of them the most pleasing, promising young men; seventeen preachers were admitted; in all the Conference there are but three married men." The first three bishops were bachelors, and so were Cooper, Bruce, Lee, and a great company of that generation.

In their northward visitation the two itinerant general superintendents passed through New York, where their "attention was strongly excited by the steam-boat—a great invention." Little did they dream of the effect of that new motor in facilitating the spread of their gospel. They traveled every day—Sundays of course excepted—to the 14th of June, when they reached Monmouth, Maine, the seat of the New England Conference. This trip, which occupied twenty-one days, can now be made in as many hours, and without fatigue.

June 10 Bishop McKendree notes in his diary:

I have passed through nearly all the sea-port towns in my course, and preached in Boston, Lynn, and Portsmouth, this week. There is a beautiful prospect of religion in Portsmouth, the seat of government for New Hampshire. I heard more doctrinal sentiments and more breathing after holiness expressed in a love-feast here than in any other place I have visited lately. This Society has been raised, and a meeting-house purchased, by George Pickering, in the course of this year.

From New England they proceeded to finish the round, by different routes to the Western Conference—Asbury going



through Pittsburg, and McKendree passing through Steubenville, Zanesville, Chillicothe, and reaching Cincinnati the last of September. His record of one week is: "My rides have been long. Rode through much rain, preached nine times to small, lonely congregations, in the course of this week." He attended three more camp-meetings—the first near Chillicothe, the second at Rev. P. Gatch's, and the last at Rev. John Collins's.

Henry Boehm was the traveling companion of the senior Bishop, and was specially useful in preaching to the Germans. Boehm's journal tells of the first Methodist preaching to his thrifty and thoughtful countrymen in the West:

September 23 we reached one of Bishop Asbury's best homes and dearest friends—Philip Gatch. While the Bishop rested there I took a tour among the Germans. Some of them had not heard preaching in their own tongue since they left their native land. Tears flowed from many eyes, and they heard with delight the word of life. What has God wrought since among the Germans!

September 30, 1809, the Western Conference commenced its session in Cincinnati. This was the first Conference held in what has since become the Queen City of the West. There were some splendid men at this Conference, who were destined, under God, to lay the foundations of Methodism in what is now the mighty West. I heard some excellent preaching here.

Eight elders were ordained, among them Samuel Parker, Miles Harper, John Collins, and Peter Cartwright. Boehm continues:

On Sunday, the 8th of October, Bishop Asbury preached in the morning, Learner Blackman in the afternoon, and Samuel Parker in the evening. The sermons were all good, but Parker's excelled. Over fifty years have passed away since I heard him, and yet the image of the eloquent Parker is before me, and I remember with what overwhelming pathos he dwelt on the "fellowship of His sufferings." The word ran through the audience like electricity, tears flowed, and shouts were heard. It was a most appropriate sermon for the last before the Conference adjourned. It prepared the ministers for the work of suffering with their Lord if they would reign with him.

Bishop Asbury then delivered to the Methodists in Cincinnati a farewell address, which was not only able and ingenious, but truly affecting. We had spent two Sabbaths there, and on the morrow were to take our departure. I heard fifteen sermons at this Conference from the master-minds of the West, men who were giving tone and character to Methodism through all that vast region.

With regret we bid farewell to our kind friends in Cincinnati and started for the South Carolina Conference, several of the preachers with us. We entered Kentucky, and at midnight the Bishop called us up and we traveled twenty-five miles to Mount Gerizim, where he had an appointment. Bishop McKendree here preached a sweet sermon from "Is it well with thee?" He used to inquire of his dying sister, Frances Moore, whom I knew very well, "Is it well with thee?" and

when he was himself on his death-bed he exclaimed, "All is well!" Bishop Asbury preached from "Suffer the word of exhortation," and then ordained.\*

Bishop McKendree has completed his first round. His biographer says: "He introduced a new style of things in presiding over the Annual Conferences; for while Bishop Asbury always presided with dignity and impartiality, yet he was regarded by the preachers as a father, and did not on all occasions adhere strictly to the Rules of Order in the management of Conference business. His age, his long services, and his intimate acquaintance with the whole work and with the workmen, gave him a position no one else could reasonably expect to occupy, and relieved him from the necessity of attending rigidly to parliamentary usage. But Bishop McKendree felt that his relation was in some respects a different one. Many of those over whom he was called to preside were older and more experienced than himself. Besides, he was a man of method, as was evinced in every thing he did and said, and had long since come to the conclusion that a close adherence to established rules by deliberative bodies is not only a protection to the minority and the president, but is calculated to expedite business. And as he was prompt, impartial, and courteous in deciding all such questions of law and order as properly devolved upon him, he soon became, in the estimation of the whole Connection, a model president."†

Asbury's criticism at the Virginia Conference was, "Mighty in talk;" McKendree's at the New York: "We had much harmony, peace, and love among the preachers; but business was done in the most desultory manner, owing to an entire abandonment of manner, and a flood of words. There were some attempts to correct these errors, in order to facilitate business, but they proved ineffectual. Friday the Conference concluded [ten days]; and in my opinion the business might all have been done in six days."

It may well be doubted whether there is any deliberative or executive body which equals a Methodist Conference, as at present constituted, in good order and the dispatch of business. Coke, Asbury, and Whatecoat were Englishmen, and although wise, great, and good, could not conform their mode of adminis-

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\* Boehm says: "It was not his [Asbury's] custom to tarry after Conference adjourned. He moved right on, and often his horse was at the door and he was ready to commence his journey as soon as the benediction was pronounced."

† Life and Times of McKendree, by Paine.

tration to American ideas. The native Bishop "placed himself and his office in harmony with the feelings and sentiments of his countrymen, by refusing to govern except according to law."

The first delegated General Conference met in New York, May 1, 1812, composed of ninety members. Now was to be tested the fealty of her representatives in the highest judicatory of the Church to the Constitution itself. "Methodism was about to pass the ordeal which the civil government had experienced in the first Congress under the Federal Constitution. And as in the latter case the practical application of the constitution was rendered both more difficult and important on account of the novelty of the experiment and the danger of introducing precedents which might lead to disastrous consequences, so in the former the utmost caution was necessary to begin the administration of the newly adopted organic laws of the Church conformably to the true intent and spirit of the ecclesiastical constitution. In both the highest qualities of mind and heart were needed. There was this obvious difference, however, in the charters under which they respectively acted—the two governments not only differ in their origin, nature, design, and mode of operations, but moreover, while the power vested in Congress is limited by specific grants of power, to be exercised for the general welfare, the delegated General Conference possessed, by constitutional right, all power originally belonging to the whole body they represented, except certain clearly defined prohibitions."\*

Among the ninety seated in "old John Street Church" we gladly recognize such veterans as Garrettson, Cooper, Ware, Lee, Bruce, Reed, and Snethen; and a fair proportion of that second generation of men whose lives are Methodist history—Soule, Hedding, Bangs, Pickering, Sale, Blackman, Sargent, and Roszell; but a special interest gathers about a sprinkling of picked young men who come the first time to the front—Lovick Pierce, John Early, Thomas L. Douglass, James E. Glenn, Samuel Dunwoody, Enoch George, and R. R. Roberts.

At the opening of the Conference Bishop McKendree made a communication in writing, portions of which were referred to appropriate committees. The address was designed to call the attention of the Conference to the condition and wants of the Church. It was the beginning of episcopal addresses, which

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\* Life and Times of McKendree, by Paine.



have been continued from that time. Bishop Asbury made a long verbal address, directing it chiefly to his colleague.

Asbury had been trained in the English Wesleyan school, and his presidency had been similar, in some respects, to the British system of holding Conferences. The sessions held under him had not been conducted very strictly by parliamentary rules. An octogenarian who was present describes the scene:

McKendree's address was read in Conference, but as it was a new thing the aged Bishop (Asbury) rose to his feet immediately after the paper was read, and addressed the junior Bishop to the following effect: "I have something to say to you before the Conference." The junior also rose to his feet, and they stood face to face. Bishop Asbury went on to say: "This is a new thing. I never did business in this way, and why is this new thing introduced?" The junior Bishop promptly replied: "You are our father, we are your sons; you never have had need of it. I am only a brother, and have need of it." Bishop Asbury said no more, but sat down with a smile on his face. The scene is now before me. I believe the Bishops have pursued the plan ever since.

At this Conference local deacons were made eligible to the office of elders. A motion to remove the Book Concern to the city of Baltimore—no property as yet having been purchased in New York—was lost, and Daniel Hitt and Thomas Ware were elected Book Agents. The Western Conference disappears from the Minutes, its territory being divided into the Ohio and the Tennessee Conferences. An old question is up. Asbury's journal says: "After a serious struggle of two days in General Conference to change the mode of appointing presiding elders, it remains as it was. Means had been used to keep back every presiding elder who was known to be favorable to appointments by the Bishops, and long and earnest speeches have been made to influence the minds of the members. I had seventeen of the preachers to dine with me. There was vinegar, mustard, and a still greater portion of oil; but the disappointed parties sat down in peace, and we enjoyed our sober meal."

The venerable man who had been permitted to see the Church organization completed, and all its vital forces in full play, never met another General Conference. His journal in June, 1813: "I have made my will, appointing Bishop McKendree, Daniel Hitt, and Henry Boehm my executors. If I do not in the meantime spend it, I shall leave, when I die, an estate of two thousand dollars, I believe. I give it all to the Book Concern. This money, and somewhat more, I have inherited from dear depart-

ed Methodist friends in the State of Maryland who died childless, besides some legacies which I have never taken. Let all return and continue to aid the cause of piety." He kept moving round among the churches until 1815, when we find him again in the West. "My friends in Philadelphia," he says, "gave me a little light, four-wheeled carriage, but God and the Baltimore Conference made me a richer present—they gave me John Wesley Bond for a traveling companion. Has he his equal on the earth for excellences of every kind as an aid? I groan one minute with pain, and shout Glory! the next." He is ever and anon in the houses of those whose parents and grandparents were converted under his ministry in the Eastern States. "In this family I have served four generations," is the record on baptizing a child in Kentucky. "I preached in his grandfather's house in Maryland in 1774," is the record as he concludes a religious service in a log-cabin at the western foot of the Alleghany Mountains," and adds: "God still dwells with this family." At the Ohio Conference he is present, but unable to preside; he says: "John Sale finished the plan of the stations from a general draft I furnished him. We closed our labors in peace. One thing I remark—our Conferences are out of their infancy; their rulers can now be called from amongst themselves."

In the journey with his colleague, on the road from the Ohio Conference, they "had a long, earnest talk about the affairs of the Church; I told him the Western part of the empire would be the glory of America, and ought to be marked out for five Conferences;" and he marked out five where now are fifty.

At Bethlehem, near Lebanon, the Tennessee Conference met, October, 1815. It was Bishop Asbury's last session. He says: "Sabbath.—I ordained the deacons and preached a sermon, in which Dr. Coke was remembered. My eyes fail. I resign the stations to Bishop McKendree; I will take away my feet." Thirty times in thirty-one years he had visited the South. "I wish to visit Mississippi, but am resigned." Let us glance at the situation in the West: In the Ohio Conference David Young is presiding elder of the Ohio District, Jacob Young of the Muskingum, James Quinn of the Scioto, John Sale of the Miami, Samuel Parker of the Kentucky, and Charles Holliday of the Salt River District. They are helped by such men as William McMahon, Marcus Lindsey, J. B. Finley, and Benjamin Lakin

Henry B. Bascom appears on the list as junior preacher on the Mad River Circuit. In the Tennessee Conference Thomas L. Douglass is the presiding elder of the Nashville District, John McGee of the Cumberland, Peter Cartwright of the Green River, James Axley of the Holston, Jesse Walker of the Illinois, S. H. Thompson of the Missouri, and Samuel Sellers of the Mississippi District. Among their helpers are John Lane, Thomas Nixon, Lewis Garrett, Joshua Boucher, Benjamin Malone, Jesse Cunningham, John Henninger, John Mennifee; serving a membership of 46,500, reaching from the Lakes to the Gulf.

Despairing of keeping up with the Annual Conference sessions any longer, Asbury moved by slow and painful stages, flattering himself with the prospect of meeting the General Conference, which was to assemble in Baltimore on the 2d of May, 1816. His appearance at this time is described as more like a moving skeleton than a living man. With his faithful traveling companion, Bond, in a close carriage, he reached Richmond, Virginia, where he preached in the afternoon, March 24, in the old Methodist Church. Perceiving his weakness, his friends endeavored to dissuade him from preaching, but he insisted that he must once more deliver his public testimony in that place. They bore him from his carriage—for he was unable either to walk or stand—to the pulpit, and seated him on a table prepared for that purpose. Though he had to make frequent pauses in the course of his sermon, recovering breath, yet he spoke nearly an hour, from Rom. ix. 28: "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." This closed his public labors on earth. Friday he reached the house of his old friend, George Arnold, of Spottsylvania. He had hoped to reach Fredricksburg, twenty miles beyond, but the severity of the weather and his failing strength prevented. The night was one of much suffering. The next morning the family proposed to send for a physician, but he objected, saying that his breath would be gone before the doctor could get there, and he could only pronounce him dead. It was evident that his end was drawing near. On Sunday, at eleven o'clock, he desired that the family might be called together; and at his request Rev. J. W. Bond sung, prayed, and expounded the twenty-first chapter of Revelation. Throughout the exercises he appeared to be very much engaged in devotion.



They offered him a little barley-water, but he was unable to swallow, and his speech began to fail. Observing the distress of his beloved Bond, he raised his hand and looked joyfully at him; and in reply to his question if he felt the Lord Jesus Christ to be precious, he seemed to exert all his remaining strength, and in token of complete victory raised both hands. A few minutes after, as he sat upon his chair, without a struggle, and with great composure, he breathed his last. His body was deposited in the burial-ground of the family, but a month later, at the request of the Church in Baltimore, was taken up and brought to that city. A vast concourse of citizens attended the corpse as it was carried from the General Conference room in Light street to the place prepared for its reception in Eutaw street, preceded by Bishop McKendree as the officiating minister, and followed by the members of the General Conference as chief mourners. The corpse was placed in Eutaw Street Church, and a funeral-sermon preached by Bishop McKendree, after which the body was deposited in a vault under the recess of the pulpit. There it remained for forty years, when it was removed to Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Beginning his itinerant ministry at seventeen Francis Asbury ended it in his seventy-first year. During that time it is estimated that he averaged a sermon or an exhortation a day. The extent of his journeys, during his ministry of forty-five years in the United States, was equal, upon an average, to the circumference of the globe every five years—and this by private conveyance, mainly horseback. During the last thirty-two years of his life he presided in two hundred and thirty-four Annual Conferences, and ordained about four thousand ministers.

To him has been justly applied the remark of a British essayist, that it is vain to talk of men numerically: if the passions of a man are exalted to a summit like the majestic steadiness with which St. Paul points out the single object of his life, and the unquenchable courage with which he walks toward it, he is a thousand men!

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Canada Methodism: The Planting and the Separation—Clergy Reserves—Ryerson—Case—Bangs—Losee—Church Union in the Dominion—New Rules—Joshua Soule Book Agent—Enoch George and R. R. Roberts elected Bishops—A Conference down the Mississippi, organized in 1816.

THE war with England (1812-1815) began and ended since the last General Conference. The usual ill result upon spiritual religion, and the special effect of disturbing the relations of Canada Methodism with the Mother Church, followed.

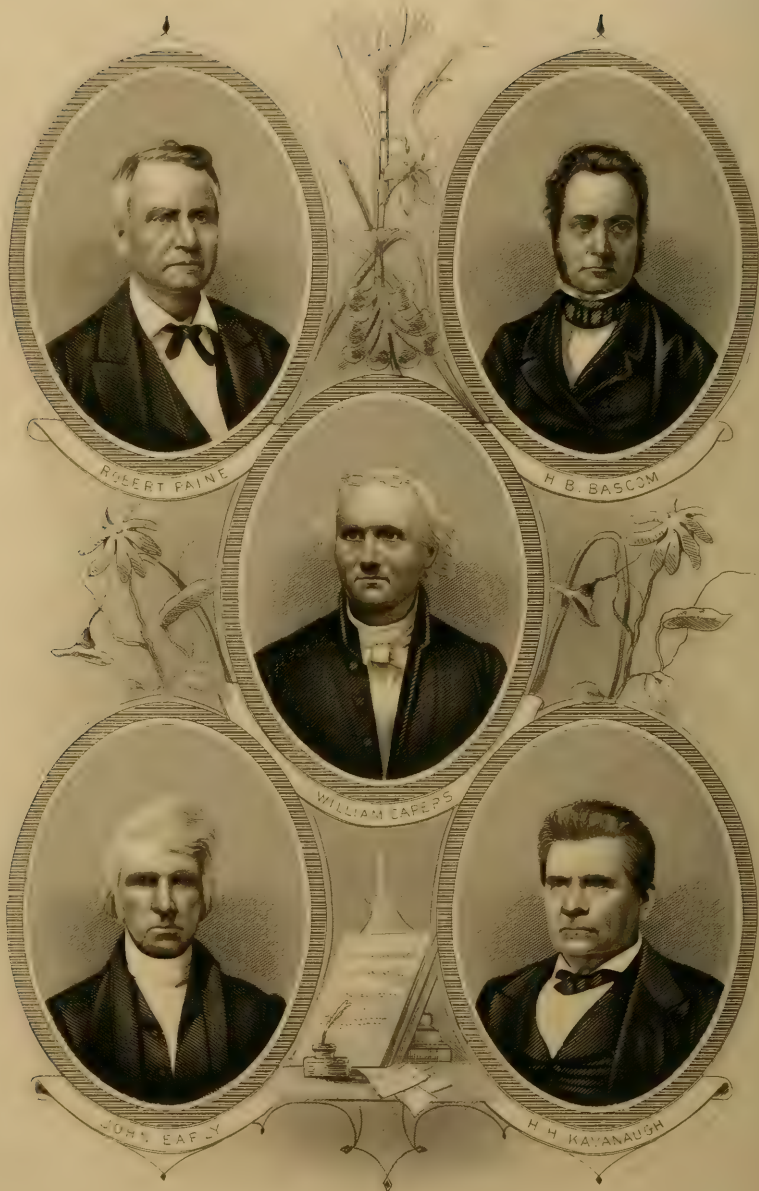
The original planting of Methodism North of the St. Lawrence was instrumentally due to what on one side is censured as toryism, and on the other is praised as loyalty. In 1780 a Wesleyan local preacher—Tuffey—as commissary of a British regiment, came to Quebec, and preached there with permanent results. As he was the first in Lower Canada, so Major Neal, of a cavalry regiment, was the first Methodist preacher in Upper Canada. A native of Pennsylvania, at the breaking out of the Revolution he joined the British Army, and after the war he taught school and preached on the Niagara frontier.

The exodus of the Embury family, first from the city to the rural parts of New York and thence, in 1774, across the line, gave to Canada Methodism the same origin with that of John Street. While mowing in his field in 1773 the good Philip injured himself so severely as to die suddenly at the age of forty-five years, "greatly beloved and much lamented." His widow and sons, and brothers and kindred, including Paul and Barbara Heck, took shelter under the flag of George the Third, at the approach of '76, and belonged to the first Methodist class in Augusta, Upper Canada; and there they are buried.

William Losee was sent over by Bishop Asbury from the New York Conference in 1790, and went again next year "as soon as the winter was well set in and the ice on the St. Lawrence strong enough to allow crossing with a horse." He was followed by Sawyer, and Coleman, and other missionaries. In 1805 William Case, "father of Indian missions in Canada," and Henry Ryan were appointed to the Bay of Quinte. "Father Case" did more for Indian evangelization than Eliot or Brainerd. Nathan







Bangs went to Canada in 1799 as a surveyor, but for want of constant employment he taught school. In 1800 he was awakened and converted through the instrumentality of the Revs. Coleman and Sawyer, near Queenstown, and commenced in 1801 as an itinerant preacher under the direction of the presiding elder of the district—Joseph Jewell. He spent the first seven years of his laborious ministerial life in Canada, after which he entered the work in the United States, and earned an imperishable record. In 1811 the apostolic Asbury made a visitation to Canada on his way to the Genesee Conference, with which it was connected. In his journal he says: "Our ride has brought us through one of the finest countries I have ever seen; the timber of noble growth, the cattle well-looking, crops abundant, on a most fruitful soil. To the people my soul is much united."

The Boswellian Boehm gives an account of crossing the river before steam ferries and suspension bridges were known: "We crossed the St. Lawrence in romantic style. We had four Indians to paddle us over. They lashed three canoes together, and put our horses into them, their fore feet into one canoe, their hind feet in another. It was a singular load—three canoes, three passengers, three horses, and four Indians. They were to take us over for three dollars. It was nearly three miles across to where we landed."

Anticipating the regular course of history a little: the most influential man in Canadian Methodism was one of an intellectual family raised up among themselves—Egerton Ryerson, D.D. His bold and powerful handling of the Clergy Reserves question brought him into notoriety when a young man, and he continued long in important public service, and must live in grateful remembrance. The case stood thus:

The "Clergy Reserves" consisted of one-seventh of all the surveyed lands of Upper Canada, set apart by the "Constitutional Act" which established the parliamentary government of Upper Canada, for the "support of a Protestant clergy," in contradistinction to the Roman Catholic clergy of Lower Canada, who were largely endowed by tithes and lands. It was intended that Upper Canada should be an English and Protestant province, while Lower Canada should be French and Roman Catholic. In Lower Canada there was no legislative endowment for Protestantism, in Upper Canada there was no legislative endowment for Romanism.

It was now claimed that the "Protestant clergy" of the "Constitutional Act" were the clergy of the Church of England alone; it was *the* Established Church of Upper Canada as well as of England and Ireland. Not only was one-seventh of the

lands of the Province claimed as the patrimony of the clergy of that Church, but large English parliamentary grants were applied for, and a large endowment of land was granted for a University College, including a Faculty of Theology, all under the direction of the authorities of that Church, and based on its Articles of Religion and Service of Worship.

But even this monstrous system might not have excited much attention or opposition, had it not appeared that the great object of the whole scheme was not merely the support of the Church of England in Canada, but the extermination of other religious persuasions, especially of the Methodists, who were represented as republicans and overrunning the country, and whose influence was represented as hostile to the civil and religious institutions of England.\*

After a conflict of twenty years, religious liberty—equality before the law—was secured for all Protestant Churches.† Others shared in the benefit, but Methodism led in the bold challenge and in the protracted struggle, and lost nothing by it, as its commanding position in Canada this day shows.

A delegation from the London Methodist Missionary Society was present at the opening of the General Conference of 1816, asking the Americans to retire from the field. Two resolutions adopted at Baltimore show the drift of the reply:

Although the late hostilities between the two countries separated for some time those provinces from the immediate superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, yet all the circuits, except Quebec, were as regularly supplied as circumstances would admit of, with American preachers.

It furthermore appears, from written and verbal communications, that it is the desire of the great majority of the people in Upper and Lower Canada to be supplied, as heretofore, with preachers from the United States.

Canadian Methodists were at a disadvantage in any contest among citizens. The chief charge against them at home, and the common ground of opposition during many years, was that their ministers were disaffected to the government and institutions of the country, being ordained and controlled by bishops in the United States. The agitation began now which ended in the withdrawal of the jurisdiction of the American General Conference from Canada; not, however, until English Wesleyan missionaries had been sent into the field, and complications had arisen that required delicate negotiations to preserve fraternal relations.

That portion of America which people in the United States habitually think of as contracted and cold is indeed the shoulders of the continent—its broadest part. It is not only fertile in soil and bracing in climate, but nourishes one of the most spiritual,

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\* Canadian Methodism: Its Epochs and Characteristics. 1882.



cultivated, and aggressive forms of Methodism in the world. In their institutions of learning, their tasteful, commodious churches, their missionary offerings, their earnest piety, and their exemplification of the modes, as well as the spirit, of Wesleyanism, they fall behind none. After several adjustments and forms in Church organization, Canadian Methodism, in the centennial year, presents itself as one compact body. Until 1874 there were five bodies of Methodists: the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Primitive Methodists, the Bible Christian Methodists, the New Connection Methodists, and the Wesleyan Methodists. In 1874 the New Connection Methodists and the Methodists of the Wesleyan Church were united, and in 1883 the remaining bodies were joined together, and now these five, with a membership aggregating nearly two hundred thousand, make one common Methodism for the Dominion of Canada.

It was necessary to change the management of the Book Concern. Though its capital was reported at \$80,000, it was embarrassed. Joshua Soule and T. Mason were elected Agents, and directed to resume the publication of the *Methodist Magazine*, which had been started in 1789, but was suspended the year following. In 1818 it was resumed, under the editorship of Joshua Soule. Not less than ten thousand subscribers were obtained the first year. The work was published monthly until 1841, when it assumed the title of *Quarterly Review*, in which character it continued. The magazine would compare indifferently with modern literature of its kind; but it was a great step in advance. Its doctrinal sermons and essays, its biographical sketches, and its occasional letters of news, with now and then a review of some author who had indulged, hitherto with impunity, in an assault upon Methodist doctrine or polity, made good reading for the times. It was a medium of communication for preachers and people; and while it edified and united the Church, it also prepared the way for the weekly visits of the *Christian Advocates*, and the more elaborate *Quarterly*. Joshua Soule frankly notified the Conference of the risk they ran in making him Book Agent, for he knew nothing about the business. However, upon his general force of character they elected him. He found the Concern without credit, and the stock old and comparatively valueless. He opened new books, and as a loan of money was indispensable he procured it from Baltimore, his

friends there—Littig and Bryce—indorsing for him. The Book Concern prospered under his administration. He had no difficulty afterward in getting all the money he wanted—even during the financial crisis which occurred while he was in the agency. With Mason, his assistant, he boxed the books himself, and had few or no losses by transmissions or letters. The Hymn-book and Discipline were the principal publications. He was his own book editor, and went home at night and worked on the *Magazine*, often till twelve o'clock. Hence it was pleasantly called, by an editorial friend, "the work of darkness."

Two new Conferences were added—Missouri and Mississippi. The annual salary of a traveling preacher was changed in 1800 from sixty-four to eighty dollars, and in 1816 from eighty to one hundred dollars. The ratio of representation in the General Conference was altered from five to seven. A new clause was inserted in the Discipline, making it the duty of the Bishops to prescribe a course of study and of reading to be pursued by undergraduates or candidates for the ministry.

Of course the old question of the election of presiding elders by the Conference, out of a number nominated by the Bishop, was up, and this time with a new feature in the way of an amendment, which was accepted by the New York mover:

Subsequently Nathan Bangs offered to amend the first answer by appending the following words to it: "And the presiding elder so elected and appointed shall remain in office four years, unless sooner dismissed by the mutual consent of the Bishop and the Conference, or unless he be elected to some other office by the General Conference. But no presiding elder shall be removed from office during the term of four years without his consent, unless the reasons for such removal be stated to him in the presence of the Conference, who shall decide without debate."

The whole question was lost by a vote of forty-two to sixty, showing an increased conservative majority.

Slavery also had an airing. Since 1808 each Annual Conference had been authorized "to make its own rules about buying and selling slaves;" but in 1816 the General Conference resolved that "no slave-holder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the State in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." This was a compromise measure. In 1812, a "motion," by an Ohio member, "requesting the Conference to inquire into the nature and moral tendency of slavery was voted to lie on the table."

Enoch George, of the Baltimore Conference, and Robert Richmond Roberts, of the Philadelphia, were elected and consecrated Bishops; the former receiving fifty-seven, and the latter fifty-five votes, out of one hundred and six.

Enoch George was a native of the Northern Neck of Virginia, a region that has been prolific of great men. He was about fifty years of age. At the call of Bishop Asbury he labored in South Carolina and Georgia several years. His health failing, he returned to Virginia, and about 1800 entered the Baltimore Conference, where he filled various important appointments and districts. He is thus described:

Short of stature, but stoutly built. His features were grave, and expressive of strong emotions; his eyes, small and deeply seated beneath an overhanging, heavy brow, twinkled or melted into tears, as the sentiments he uttered might demand; and his voice thrilled or softened the hearts of his auditory, as he poured out his soul with a pathos the writer never heard excelled; for he can never forget a sermon preached in Tennessee at his first visit to that Conference in 1817. His text was, "And this is the victory that overcometh the world—even our faith." There was something in his manner of address, in the tones of his voice, the subdued yet earnest and fervid spirit of the preacher, that affected the whole audience. He explained faith, and illustrated its victory by Bible incidents, in the most simple and appropriate style. Since then I have heard many impressive sermons from the best preachers of the land; they have instructed, charmed, and thrilled me; but I have never heard a man who so strongly wrought upon my feelings, and kept me bathed in tears from the beginning to the close of his sermon. The image of that man of God and the scenes of that hour are still vividly fixed in my memory. He wept over sinners; tears were constantly welling up in his eyes, and without pausing he would slip a finger behind his spectacles and brush away the blinding tear, to be replaced by another at the very next sentence.\*

After twelve years of episcopal service he died, greatly beloved. His administrative ability was not of a high order. His feeling of self-distrust was such as to make the duties of public intercourse, which his office drew upon him, embarrassing and painful. For constitutional questions he had no taste. Paul never spoke with more plainness to Peter than did his senior colleague to Enoch George, who held on his way and let constitutional constructions take care of themselves.

The parents of R. R. Roberts moved from Maryland when he was a child, and settled at the western base of the Alleghany Mountains, and amid such scenes he grew up.

At the General Conference of 1808 he appeared as a member,

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\* Life and Times of McKendree, by Paine.



clad in homespun style, but such was the impression produced by his preaching that at the solicitation of many of the most intelligent members of the Church, after the close of the session, Bishop Asbury directed him to quit his work in the Western backwoods, and take charge of the Baltimore City Station. From the competent source before quoted we take the measure of the man and preacher:

The writer first saw Bishop Roberts at the Tennessee Conference of 1817, held in Franklin, and heard him preach in the court-house, on Heb. ii. 3. He held an immense audience as if spell-bound for more than an hour, while he portrayed the fearful consequences of neglecting the "great salvation." He weighed two hundred and twenty pounds. His whole person indicated him to be one of nature's noblemen. His features were large, benignant, and intellectual. His head was of an uncommon size, his forehead high and massive, his eyes blue or hazel-colored, his manner of address always easy and graceful, his voice a deep bass, but soft and musical; there was nothing constrained or unnatural in its modulation, but it was an earnest and animated conversational tone. When excited by "thoughts that burn," his majestic frame seemed to expand, and his "mind-illuminated face" glowed. Many years afterward I heard him again in Huntsville, Alabama, on Sabbath morning of the Conference. The text was, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." It was a glorious sermon—worthy of the man and the occasion, and as worthy of the theme as any I ever heard.

He was remarkable for humility and simple dignity of manners. He was surprised at his own popularity as a preacher, and his election to the episcopacy almost overwhelmed him. He always shunned notoriety, and but for conscience' sake would have retired to his humble cottage-home, in the most secluded portion of Indiana, and spent his life unnoticed and unknown.

He made an excellent Bishop. The only deficiencies under which he labored originated in his size and his sympathies. Owing to his great weight he failed on many occasions to reach the Conferences at the proper time, and occasionally to get to them at all; for, on account of the want of public conveyances, and the condition of the roads, especially in the West and South, he was obliged to travel on horseback, and no horse could be found capable of bearing him through his long tours. His sympathies were so strong that he could not always resist their influence, even though his judgment might demur.

Four years before it had been provided "that the Bishops shall have authority, in the interval of the General Conference, to appoint another Annual Conference down the Mississippi, if they find it to be necessary." They were not able to do any thing in that way. Now the organization had been determined on definitely, and Bishop Roberts's first visitation was to the Mississippi Conference.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

Difficulties of Planting Methodism in the South-west—Useful Local Preachers and Laymen—Vick, Bowman, Tooley, Ford, French—From Tombigbee to Attakapas—Nolley's Death—Occupation of New Orleans—Three Conferences—Lasley, Griffin, Drake, Sellers, Hearn, Hewit, Nixon, Shrock, Owens.

THE territory of the original Natchez Circuit was enriched in the first decade of the century by the immigration of Methodist families from the two Carolinas and from Georgia—Owens, Robertson, Baldrige (five brothers), and Forman. After getting class-meetings and prayer-meetings under way, they resolved to build a church. An eligible spot near a spring having been selected and secured to trustees according to Discipline, proclamation was made for all who were willing to build the Lord's house to meet on a certain day with axes and other tools. They met, and the name of Cæsar, a godly slave who asked to have a hand in the work, is preserved as one of the company. "This will do for our first log," said one, running his eye up the shaft of a tall tree—and he raised his ax. "Stop!" said Thomas Owens. "Stop a moment, if you please. Neighbors and friends, we want the blessing of God on our work; let us begin it with prayer." They lifted their hats and kneeled on the ground, while Thomas Owens prayed so fervently that they felt it was a prophecy of the future prosperity of Spring Hill Church; and so it was. In time finer structures succeeded the log-house, yet the name of each, and of the camp-ground, was Spring Hill. Many souls were born there. The sons of Owens and Robertson were converted and were among the first preachers the Mississippi Territory gave to the Mississippi Conference. "Little Tommie Owens," as he was called, was for fifty-five years a useful and very popular minister. It was a hard task of his life, even when he was eighty years old, to observe the scriptural injunction—"Likewise must the deacons be grave." The logical Winans used to praise and covet the power of Owens in reaching the feelings of an audience. John J. Robertson filled circuits and colored missions with fidelity, retired late in life to the local ranks, and died in his seventy-ninth year, leaving a son who represents him in the traveling ministry.

In the same region, and at an early day, rose up Hopewell and

Bethel, other centers of spiritual power, where revivals and camp-meetings and Conferences made history, and from which laborers went into the vineyard. Considering their influence, such places may well be called sacred.

The coming of Revs. Samuel Sellers and Miles Harper from the Western Conference, in the autumn of 1809, was a signal event to the Church in Mississippi—they left their impress upon the field as few others have done. But before their arrival certain local preachers came, and were soon followed by others, who mightily strengthened the stakes. Newit Vick, with an interesting family, was from Virginia, a preacher of several years' standing and of excellent ability and character. When the attempt was made in 1807 to build a church in Natchez, though living many miles in the country he headed the list with the largest subscription (\$150). In his house near Spring Hill the first Conference was held in 1813. Public-spirited and zealous, he and his large family were a blessing in social as well as in Church life. The advantage of a certain location near the Walnut Hills was taken in by his intelligent eye; the ridges converging there led out into fat lands, and tapped fertile valleys, and by these natural roads a future commerce would seek the river at this point. He possessed it, laid it off into lots, and the city of Vicksburg began to rise. He died in 1819.

About 1810 Matthew Bowman, of South Carolina, settled in Amite county, and without delay opened his commission as a preacher. Soon he collected members enough for the nucleus of a society and, selecting a central point for the older settlements and the newer, they built the famous Midway Church. From it have gone out standard-bearers in other communities and in other States. Bowman, like Vick, preached far and near, baptized and married the people, and buried their dead, and set them an example of energy, thrift, and benevolence in every-day life. The itinerant pastors on their four and six weeks' circuits found them helpers indeed. At the age of three-score and ten Matthew Bowman died, saying, "I find the gospel the power of God unto salvation." Wm. Winans, who had married and fixed his home near Midway and was now become the leading minister of the South-west, preached the funeral-sermon; and seldom had preacher so good a subject. Says the historian of those times: "One of the last great joys of the patriarch's heart on earth was



the powerful conversion of his son James. It occurred a year before his death." He also entered the local ministry and, after preaching for many years in Southern Mississippi, removed west of the river and continued his usefulness in the Ouachita country, living beyond seventy-five years.

Henry Tooley, M.D., a native of North Carolina, settled in Natchez not later than 1811, where his father and brother preceded him, exerting an elevating influence as citizens and Christians. Of Dr. Tooley our historian says: "In all Church matters he took an active part. He was a pillar in the Church. Until enfeebled by age he often officiated as leader in the prayer and class meetings, in addition to his pulpit labors in town and country;" and he died at the age of seventy-five.

The parents of John Ford were of Huguenot ancestry. He and his wife were converted in South Carolina under the ministry of George Dougherty. A family of eight sons and five daughters resembled their parents in fine intelligence and a noble personal appearance. About 1807 John Ford led a small colony from Marion District to that beautiful and fertile spot in the Tennessee River Valley where Huntsville now stands. A year of isolation from civilized society and of exposure to Indian depredations caused them to quit their new home and, building flat-boats, they floated down to the Natchez country. John Ford made his home on Pearl River, east of the older settlements. He was a model citizen, of commanding and sanctifying influence. His home was a rallying-point for Methodism. There he dispensed a Christian hospitality; and as Vick had entertained the first session of the Territorial Conference at Spring Hill, Ford entertained the second session on Pearl River. Four of his sons became Methodist preachers. One of them—Thomas Ford—organized the society and built the first Methodist church at the capital of the State, and had it ready in time for holding the convention to arrange the Centennial celebrations of 1839. John Ford, jr. and David, an older brother, gave to Texas Methodism their useful ministry. Washington Ford was admitted into the Conference in 1830 and, after ten years in the itinerancy, rendered acceptable service as a local preacher until his death.\*

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\*These items, and many following in this chapter, are gathered mainly from the "Introduction of Protestantism into Mississippi and the South-west," by Rev. J. G. Jones (1866); and his MS. History of Mississippi Methodism.

John French, an Irishman, but with five or six years' experience as a traveling preacher in the Virginia Conference, found his way into the Tombigbee Valley in 1810. He had married, and must therefore locate—not to get rich, but to support his family. His coming was a benediction to the people and the preachers too, for Sturdevant had been succeeded by Michael Burge and John W. Kennon, and these young preachers needed help in administering the sacraments as well as in discipline. When Burge retired from this field (for the itinerancy relieves by change) John S. Ford was sent to reënforce it.\*

In any just account of the rise and progress of the Church in the wilderness, mention must be made of certain godly families that were providentially dispersed as leaven in the lump or as lights in a dark place. Judge Warner, of South Carolina, settled on the Bogue Chitto as early as 1803. Of his seven sons four became preachers, and a fifth an exhorter. Peter Felder also, from the old Edisto Circuit, and others—Sandell, Bickham, Bullock, and Connerly—made their home on the waters of Tangipahoa and Bogue Chitto, streams flowing into Lake Pontchartrain. These had been trained by such pastors as Isaac Smith, Lewis Myers, James Jenkins, and Reddick Pierce, and they brought their family altars with them. They sanctified the Sabbath, supported camp-meetings, built churches, and were the rallying-points and recruiting stations for the itinerant preachers who ranged at large. In the valley of Pearl River were Rawles—two of them preachers—Reagan, Hope H. Lenoir, and other Obedoms with whom the ark of the Lord rested. Going still eastward to the Tombigbee Valley, and to the Chickasawha, Buckattonie, and other streams emptying into Pascagoula Bay, we meet the names of McRae, Godfrey, Horn, Boykin, Funches, Easley, and Hand, with the Church in their houses. Their descendants of the second and third generations have taken the gospel with them and planted the Church in many of the thriving scenes of our later civilization.

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\* He was not of the Pearl River family of Fords, but after full proof as an evangelist on the frontier, he returned to Georgia, where in old age and well beloved he lately died. J. W. Kennon was one of a gifted and consecrated family of brothers—the other two being Robert L. and Charles L. He died at his post east of the Mississippi, but gave a son (Rev. Robert W. Kennon) to Texas, where he rendered long and valuable service to the Church.

In the spring of 1812 four young men, on horseback, take the road to the West. They are missionaries from South Carolina—Thomas Griffin, Richmond Nolley, Lewis Hobbs, and Drury Powell. At Milledgeville, Georgia, they get passports to go through the Indian Nation, of three hundred and fifty miles; for the Creeks or Muskogees are directly on their path, and to maintain peace with them the Government is careful to keep out mischief-making men. The missionaries represent to His Excellency what sort of men they are, he is satisfied, their papers are made out, and with a bow they are retiring. "Stop, brethren," says one of them, the pale Nolley, who believed that prayer was never amiss; "stop! The Governor has given us passports through the Nation; let us now ask God to give him a passport from this world to a better." The Governor and his secretary were called to their knees, and they prayed there.

Passing through the wilderness, crossing five rivers and lying out eleven nights, they arrived safely at the Tombigbee Mission, where Nolley's appointment was. He entered upon it at once, visiting and praying with every family on both sides of the river where he had access, teaching the negroes, catechising the children, keeping his fasts and his appointments to preach. Next spring he was joined by John Shrock, from the Dutch-fork of Edisto, and a heavenly-minded young man—John Ira Ellis Byrd—who gave fifty years of blessed service in the field he was now going to. They were both from the South Carolina Conference, and just risen to deacon's orders. Not many came through the wilderness after them for the next two years. War was begun. Tecumseh and his brother, the Prophet, had seized the opportunity for revenge. Seeking a far-reaching combination, from Canada to Florida, they visited the Southern tribes to bring them into alliance with England. Arms and rewards were to be furnished at Pensacola and Apalachicola, from ships that were in those waters. The Choctaws and Chickasaws refused the offer and under their chief, Pushmataha, furnished soldiers for defense. The Creeks and Seminoles entered into the league, and at the sign of hostilities the white settlements were thrown into dismay. Deserting their homes, the people built forts, or stations, into which families were crowded. Twelve or fourteen of these were in the fork between the Alabama and Tombigbee rivers. The murder of individuals and families and an attack upon



some of the forts kept up alarm; but in August, 1813, Fort Mims, a few miles east of the Alabama River, was attacked by several hundred Indians under the half-breed chief Weatherford, and a horrid massacre followed. Twenty families in the fort were exterminated; only seventeen persons escaped out of two hundred and fifty. The horror of Fort Mims drove nearly all the inhabitants into forts west of the Tombigbee. When the Government troops got in motion the Creek warriors met a terrible retribution, and a treaty of peace with the chiefs that were left was made in August of the next year. The people slowly returned to their desolated homes and farms and, but for the hardy ingenuity and courage peculiar to frontier life, famine must have followed war. The missionaries staid by the people. Shrock insisted on a gun and a port-hole, but Nolley went from fort to fort, a messenger of peace, improving the opportunity of preaching to all the inhabitants. It was a wonder to many how, without guard, the non-combatant Nolley passed on his preaching mission. Whether fortunately preserved from collision with the savages, or whether they were restrained by the Divine edict, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm," so it was, no harm befell him; and when the forts were abandoned the gospel had been sounded abroad through all that country.

Nolley and Shrock had reached their field of labor when the journey of their companions to the West was only half accomplished. Lewis Hobbs spent a year in the limits of the circuit Tobias Gibson had cultivated, and his style reminded the people of their first missionary. He was a weeping prophet, a lovely spirit, and his brief ministry made a deep impression. Part of a year he labored in New Orleans, where his last strength was spent. He sunk into consumption and barely got back to Georgia to die. Drury Powell preached one year beyond the river, and concluded that the time had not come for those people, and returned whence he came. Thomas Griffin was assigned to the most distant and difficult post of all—the Ouachita Circuit. He proved a chosen vessel of the Lord. Few have been so honored in planting Methodism in the South-west. He lived to a good old age, and his memory is blessed by thousands. While Nolley persuaded sinners and Hobbs wept over them, Griffin made them quail and shrink, and hide their faces in fear and shame. There was a clear, metallic ring in his nature. Without

the advantages of fortune or education he made his way by stronger forces. By the camp-fire, on the forest-path, he studied. One of the saddle-bags men—to whom Western civilization is more indebted than to any other class of agents—he mastered the hardy elements of frontier life. Sagacious in judgment, decisive in action, strong in speech, generous-hearted. Memorable awakenings and reformations of notorious and hopeless sinners occurred under his ministry. He would “get on the sinner’s track,” as he phrased it, and press him close, calling conscience to witness as he went along. His language was often more forcible than elegant. The presumptuous sinner was “one of your gospel-slighting, heaven-neglecting, God-provoking, devil-daring, hell-deserving rebels against the majesty of the universe.” The drunkard, in his estimation, “was a far worse character than the frantic suicide who would take a pistol and blow out his brains, thus ridding his family of a pest, and leaving his property for their maintenance; whereas the drunkard, after disgracing his family with his besotted example, afflicting them with his drunken revels, wasting his property, breaking the heart of his wife, and hanging his poor, ragged, uneducated children on the horns of poverty, is in the end a self-murderer.” If he had occasion to hold up the superannuated debauchee in order to show that the way of transgressors is hard, he would describe him as “the very frazzle-ends of humanity; his debauched carcass would disgrace a wolf-trap if put in it for bait.” His scathing denunciation of vice stirred the ire and resentment of the wicked. They had driven off Powell, and a leader of roughs resolved, upon the reports that had reached him, to drive off Griffin. This man went to one of his appointments, listened to a terribly searching and courageous discourse, and after the service was over remarked to some one who had heard his threat that “Mr. Griffin improved on further acquaintance, and he reckoned it was best to have a few such preachers in the country, so he would not interrupt him.”

In 1820 the Mississippi delegation to the General Conference consisted of two preachers—Thomas Griffin and John Lane. Griffin was not pleased at the speeches of certain Northern delegates on slavery; they assumed its sinfulness as a foregone conclusion, and took ground that would have excluded Abraham himself from the Christian Church. The epithets they applied

to slave-holders were by no means to his taste. Southern delegates pleased him little better—their tone was excusatory rather than defensive. To use his own expression, “They were too much like supplicants to suit my feelings.” He made an off-hand speech which, whatever else it lacked, was not lacking in energy of expression. “It appears,” said he, “that some of our Northern brethren are willing to see us all damned and double-damned, rammed, jammed, and crammed into a forty-six pounder, and touched off into eternity.” Thomas Griffin found a good wife among the daughters of John Ford, and after presiding over districts in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, that are now Annual Conferences, he met the last enemy, as he had met all others—like a Christian hero.

Nov. 1, 1813, the preachers from both sides of the river met at Newit Vick's to hold the first Mississippi Conference. The time and place had been appointed by the Bishop; but on their east and north-east the Creeks and Cherokees were hostile, and it was yet doubtful whether or not the Choctaws and Chickasaws would join Tecumseh's league; therefore the Tennessee Conference in October formally advised Bishop McKendree not to adventure himself upon the Natchez trace. Samuel Sellers was appointed president, and William Winans secretary. There were ten members to begin with, and the session lasted four days. For three years they thus met and transacted business, sending their Minutes to Tennessee to be approved and incorporated into the Minutes of that body. Among eight appointments, extending from Louisiana to Alabama, we find “New Orleans, William Winans.” There was in the treasury \$39.18, and “\$30 of this amount was voted to Brother Winans to enable him to fill the Orleans Station.” Of the very few in that very ungodly city of fifteen thousand inhabitants who were willing to own themselves Methodists was a Dutchman—Jacob Knobb—and his wife.\* They received the young missionary into their house and rented him, at a moderate price, the ground-floor for a school; it was also the chapel. Here William Winans acted school-master in the week, and parson of evenings and Sundays. His congregations were small, and his membership did not amount to the prescriptive number for a class-meet-

\* Not only the man, but the house, deserves record. “He lived in a two-story brick house on Bienville, between Chartres and Royal streets.” (J. G. Jones's MS.)



ing; but he scrupulously went through all the forms of public and social worship, and had some comfortable times. The fleet and army of Pakenham were beleaguering the city, and the excitement and alarm of war quite closed the little school and church on Bienville street, and he left in time to meet the Conference at John Ford's, on Pearl River, Nov. 14, 1814. No numerical progress was reported, but a *reconnoissance* had been made which was not without value in the future.

In the chapter which names Jacob Knobb let another humble but faithful servant of the Church in New Orleans be remembered—also a foreigner—who stood firmly by the feeble and despised cause when friends were few. From the St. Domingo insurrection Theresa Canu escaped when a girl, and took refuge in Wilmington, North Carolina. There she learned Methodism, and thence removed to New Orleans. She lived long, bravely bore the reproach of Christ, opened her house to the messengers of her Master, and sung and shouted in the little conventicles where Methodism took shelter for many humble years. Theresa Canu was to Methodism in the Crescent City what Mrs. General Russell (sister of Patrick Henry) was to it in the Holston country and Jane Trimble in Ohio, and what Lydia had been to the Church at Philippi.

New Orleans appeared on the Minutes of 1812, with Miles Harper as pastor. There is no record that he achieved any thing. Next year the dying Hobbs meditated and prayed along its streets, and sought out a few souls in private houses. Blackman, when in charge of the district which nominally included the city, made an occasional visit, but it is doubtful if he ever preached a sermon. As early as 1805 Elisha W. Bowman vainly searched over the place for standing-ground. The year following Winans's retirement martial law and the closing scenes of war did not increase the prospects of success. There was no fund to support a missionary, and other fields could be occupied to more advantage; so New Orleans disappears from the roll until 1819, when Mark Moore served it as his predecessor had done—teaching and preaching. After him came John Menefee, who subsequently died of yellow fever, and is buried there; and again a retreat was beaten from the city. In 1825 a young man, a native of Kentucky, took charge there,\* and from that time Methodism

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\*He reported twenty-three white members and sixty colored in 1826.

has stood in her lot. Next year Benjamin M. Drake was returned. A man of zeal and consecration, he took a place in the early history of Methodism on Lower Mississippi only second to that of Winans: while in the fervor of his style and the telling effect upon the hearts of the people of his long and laborious ministry, he was his superior. About the time Methodism drove down her stake to stay in New Orleans, Mobile took its place permanently in the Minutes—John R. Lambuth, missionary. Both were very hard places; and those who behold their strong and well-ordered churches of to-day cannot realize the weary toil and waiting and cost of life incurred before a firm footing was gained. Especially is this true of New Orleans. Within the life-time of a generation it had been under three different governments. Romanism was intrenched, with all its appliances and consequences. There was no Sabbath. A pleasure-loving, dissolute, and heterogeneous population was divided between superstition and infidelity. The *entrepot* for the Valley of the Mississippi, New Orleans rapidly grew from fifteen to a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, with all the concomitants of luxury and greed. Hundreds, thousands of Methodists and other professing Christians were swallowed up as they came within reach of that moral maelstrom. Fascinated, ensnared by its peculiar blandishments of sin, they became ashamed of, and then denied, their faith. William Winans was in sight when not on the spot to direct the little band, to encourage, and to take advantage of opportunities, and to rally them in time of temporary defeat; and he acted for some while as agent to collect funds abroad to build a church in the strongest stronghold of the world, the flesh, and the devil that existed on the continent during the first thirty years of the present century. If his success was not complete, he at least put the struggling cause in position where others, under more favorable circumstances, could achieve such success.\*

Elsewhere in the Valley of the Mississippi the itinerant

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\*The minister is yet living, and we trust the day is far off when his name can be more freely spoken to, whose pulpit and pastoral fidelity, and administrative power, crowned the work which others began. The systematic and comprehensive plans laid and carried out by Rev. John Christian Keener, D.D. (now Bishop), date the epoch of the present New Orleans Methodism. He was appointed by Bishop Paine pastor of Poydras Street Church in 1848, met the yellow fever and outlived it in 1849, and has since resided in the city, a witness, and under God the chief director, of the prosperous condition of its Methodism.

preacher sowed the seed of the gospel in virgin soil; but in Louisiana tares had been long and plentifully scattered and cultivated. If the occupation of the chief city was delayed and often defeated, and finally achieved at the cost of great labor and suffering patience, the same is equally true of the country. Attakapas, Opelousas, and Ouachita, early appear on the roll of appointments. In our ecclesiastical geography Attakapas\* stands for the southern region of the State, with its numerous bays, which are fed by bayous navigable for a short distance; with ocean-like prairies, where cattle is wealth; with lands deep and moist enough to grow sugar-cane; shaded with live-oak, and fanned by gulf breezes, and animated by myriads of alligators and mosquitoes. There are settlements and villages named after every saint in the calendar, and dating back to the French and Spanish occupation of a past century, with here and there an English-speaking or American family. Opelousas is a wide, undefined region, similar in character, lying above Attakapas, and reaching to Red River; and all above the river is Ouachita. A region farther up Red River, and representing the Western limit, is called Rapides. These names figure on the Conference map for a quarter of a century, and represent more heroism in itinerant history than any other section of the Church.

As early as 1805 Bishop Asbury sent a missionary to Louisiana, with directions to begin at New Orleans; and the Old Western Conference raised for his outfit and expenses one hundred dollars. For such a venture he picked a young Kentuckian, who had seen service in the North-western Territory as well as at home, and was consecrated, courageous, and knew how to make his way. Elisha W. Bowman traveled the usual route through the wilderness to Natchez and, taking leave of that Methodist outpost, continued down the left bank of the river. A letter of his may give some idea of the situation:

From Baton Rouge, the Spanish garrison on the east bank of the Mississippi River, down two hundred miles, it is settled immediately on each bank by French and Spaniards. The land is dry on each side about forty and in some places fifty rods wide, and then a cypress swamp extends each way to the lakes, and will never admit of any settlements until you cross the lakes to the east and west. When I reached the city I was much disappointed in finding but few American people there, and a majority of that few may truly be called the beasts of men. Mr.

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\* Pronounced At-tuck-a-paw; Tensas, Ten-saw; Ouachita, Wash-i-taw.



Watson, the gentleman to whom I was recommended by Mr. Asbury, had left the city early in the fall and gone home to Philadelphia.\*

The missionary went to the Governor and told him his business, and was promised protection, and the capitol to preach in. The appointment was published, but when he came on Sunday he found the doors locked. To a few sailors and creoles who stood about he preached in the open air. The Governor and Mayor, when informed of his treatment, promised to issue an order to put the house at his service on next Sunday; but when Bowman and his landlord and a few others arrived, they found it locked as before. He was among a new set of people, who politely promise in his presence, shrug their shoulders as he leaves, and refuse in the end. Not to be balked, a second sermon was delivered to ten or a dozen hearers outdoors; and the next Sunday also, to a few stragglers in the street. He writes:

The Lord's-day is the day of general rant in this city: public balls are held, merchandise of every kind is carried on, public sales, wagons running, and drums beating; and thus is the Sabbath spent. I sought in vain for a house to preach in. Several persons offered to rent me a house, but I have not money to rent a house. My expenses I found to be about two dollars a day for myself and horse, and my money pretty well spent. I tried to sell my horse, but could not get forty dollars for him. Thus I was in this difficult situation, without a friend to advise me. I was three hundred miles from Brother Blackman, and could get no advice from him; and what to do I did not know. I could have no access to the people, and to go back to Natchez is to do nothing; and to leave my station without Mr. Asbury's direction was like death to me; and to stay here I could do nothing. But by inquiring I heard of a settlement of American people about two hundred miles to the west and north-west. By getting a small boat and crossing the lakes I could reach the Opelousas country; and as I was left to think by myself, I thought this most advisable. I accordingly, on the 17th day of December, shook off the dirt from my feet against this ungodly city of Orleans, and resolved to try the watery waste and pathless desert.

Riding up the west bank of the river to Plaquemine, Bowman took to the lakes and lagoons. On two canoes he built a platform for his horse and, hiring two Spaniards to help row, he crossed "four lakes and a large bay," and reached firm ground, where were a few American families, "who came here in the time of the war, for no good deeds that they had done." "I have now," he says, "three dollars left, but God is as able to

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\* This letter was found among the papers of Rev. William Burke, to whom it was addressed at Lexington, Kentucky. It is dated Opelousas, Jan. 29, 1806, and was first published in the *New Orleans Christian Advocate*, in 1857.

feed me two years on three dollars as he was to feed Elijah at the brook, or five thousand with a few loaves and fishes." Eighty miles farther on he found "some American families, but no two of them together:"

The next day I reached the Opelousas country, and the next I reached the Catholic church. I was surprised to see a pair of race paths at the church door. Here I found a few Americans who were swearing with almost every breath; and when I reproved them for swearing they told me that the priest swore as hard as they did. They said he would play cards and dance with them every Sunday evening after mass. And, strange to tell, he keeps a race-horse! in a word, practices every abomination. I told them plainly if they did not quit swearing they and their priest would go to hell together.

About twenty miles from this place I found a settlement of American people who came to this country about the time of the American war. They know very little more about the nature of salvation than the untaught Indians. Some of them, after I had preached to them, asked me what I meant by the fall of man, and when it was that he fell. I have to teach them to sing, and in fact do every thing that is like worshipping God. I find it also very difficult to get them to attend meetings; for, if they come once they think they have done me a very great favor.

About thirty miles from here I found another small settlement of English people, who were in as great a state of ignorance as the above; but I get as many of them together as I can, and preach Jesus Christ to them. O my God! have mercy on the souls of this people!

He passed on to the Red River settlements, and thence eastwardly to the Catahoola, opposite Natchez, separated by a swamp sixty miles in extent. "A forlorn Methodist" was met with now and then, as Bowman ranged and preached. The conclusion of his letter to Burke, his father in the gospel, is characteristic:

Many days that I travel I have to swim through creeks or swamps. I tie all my plunder fast on my horse, and take him by the bridle, and swim sometimes a hundred yards. My horse's legs are now skinned and rough to his hock joints, and I have the rheumatism in all my joints; but this is nothing. About eighty miles from here, I am informed, there is a considerable settlement of American people, but I cannot get to them at this time, as the swamps are swimming for miles; but as soon as the waters fall I intend to visit them.

I have now given you a faint idea of my travels, the country, and the people. Let me now tell you how it is with my soul. What I have suffered in body and mind my pen is not able to communicate to you. But this I can say: while my body is wet with water and chilled with cold, my soul is filled with heavenly fire, and longs to be with Christ. And while these periods drop from my pen my soul is ready to leave this earthly house and fly to endless rest. Glory to God and the Lamb! I can say that I never enjoyed such a power and heaven of love as I have done for a few days past. I have not a wish but that the will of God may be done in me, through me, and by me. And I can now say with St. Paul that

"I count not my life dear unto me, so that I may save some." I feel my soul all alive to God, and filled with love to all the human family. I am now more than one thousand miles from you, and know not that I ever shall see you again, but I hope to meet you one day on the banks of Canaan, in the land of rest.

The P. S. adds: "Pardon my scratch, as I have to write on my knee, and a man is waiting at my elbow for these lines. Pray for me." Making allowance for dates, does not that "scratch," written on the knee, read like a chapter in the Acts of the Apostles? How could such a man fail? Whether the three dollars held out or not, so it was, he staid out his time, and reported seventeen members to Conference. Blackman cheered him with a visit during the year and with such vigorous help as he could give a fellow-laborer; and so a beginning was made.

Next year Bowman was appointed to Ouachita. Several Methodist families had moved into that region from the old Natchez Circuit, and though his travels were not diminished, his wardrobe was recruited and his soul refreshed with precious seasons of Christian fellowship.

On the Attakapas and Opelousas he was followed by Thomas N. Lasley, who was converted in the revival of 1800, and became one of the heroes of the next half-century of Methodist history in the Mississippi Valley. The field has been surveyed: it is time to "form a circuit;" and the reader may see how that is done, from Lasley's narrative:

The next morning I crossed the great Mississippi at sunrise, landing about one mile below the mouth of Red River. Having now before me about forty-five miles to the first settlement, and about thirty-five through a swamp, which fortunately was dry, late in the evening I reached the house of a prominent settler on the island—a settlement of high land thickly populated. Mr. Baker having heard of my coming, bid me a hearty welcome, and although in a state of intoxication, treated me with civility, while his family strove to make me happy. It being arranged that I was to preach the following Sabbath, messengers were dispatched to notify the settlers, and I endeavored to preach in the true spirit of my mission. In this my first effort in my new field, the power of God was felt in the congregation. I made an appointment to preach again at candle-lighting, at another house close by, at the request of the family. Here I met a serious congregation. Many wept bitterly on account of their sins, and I was enabled to rejoice that I had not labored in vain. Before dismissal I announced to them that I would meet them again in three weeks, and promised to spend some time with them. Early on Monday morning I left for the next settlement, a distance of forty-five miles, and twenty-five of this through a swamp. Accompanied by a young man as a pilot, we journeyed together six or eight miles, his object being to put me on the right trail through the swamp. This done, we parted. Coming to a slough in which the mud ap-



peared very deep I dreaded to pass, but seeing no way of avoiding, plunged into it, and my horse sinking under me was unable to extricate himself from the mud. I alighted, and took my saddle-bags on my arm. My horse, thus unencumbered, made a powerful struggle and released himself, and soon gained the opposite side. Thankful to Providence for the difficulty overcome, I arrived at a deep, muddy creek, which I supposed to be about sixty or seventy feet wide, where, ever and anon, the alligators rising to the surface of the water rendered the prospect gloomy. Summoning all the fortitude I possessed, and committing myself to the care of God, I fastened my saddle-bags to my shoulder and plunged into the stream. Reaching the opposite shore, I found the bank steep, and that my horse could not rise with me. I sprung from him and gained the bank, which my horse endeavoring to ascend his hind feet sunk in the mud and he fell back into the water. Recovering again, he made the second effort, at which time I threw my weight on the bridle and he reached the bank, pitching forward and falling with one of his fore legs doubled under him in such a manner as to cripple himself. Not being able to put his foot to the ground by several inches, I was apprehensive that he had slipped his shoulder, and of course would not be able to travel from that place. My condition was the subject of reflection, while the poor animal stood trembling under the agony of pain. For a few moments I almost despaired, but throwing myself on my knees before God, I committed my cause into his hands, and prayed most earnestly that he would heal my horse. Feeling within myself that he had heard my prayer, I arose from my knees and found my horse perfectly sound, and immediately recommenced my journey, rejoicing in the Lord. As the shades of night closed upon me I found myself in the most extensive prairie I had ever seen; but the beautiful queen of night soon made her appearance above the waving grass, and uprising into the heavens reflected her borrowed glories on my pathway until I arrived at a habitation, where I was admitted to a shelter. I endeavored to sow the good seed, trusting God for the increase, and left an appointment for my return. On the day following I reached Hayes's settlement, the most interesting part of Opelousas, and met with a Brother Foreman and wife, members of our Church, who received me joyfully. I held a meeting, and leaving a Sabbath appointment with them, I started for the Red River settlements, having a wilderness before me of sixty-five miles. I had to rest in the forest alone for the night, but my God was there and I had nothing to fear. Alexandria, on the banks of Red River, was the next point in which I unfurled the banner of the cross. For many miles around this town is the most fertile country I ever saw, and some parts of it are thickly settled with a mixed population of French, Spaniards, and Americans. Ascending the bayou, I made an appointment at a Mr. Griffin's, where I was ultimately enabled to form a class. My next point was the Catahoola settlements. Here I established two appointments—one at Brother Wiggins's, and the other at Brother Bowie's, whose wife I found to be one of the excellent of the earth. I am sorry that their son is the inventor of that most dreadful weapon called the Bowie-knife. With this young man I was then acquainted—at that time a civil young man.

Having thus laid out my field of labor, upward of three hundred miles in circumference, I returned to the island, where I found an anxiously inquiring people. I remained three days with them, preaching both night and day, and I hope not in vain. I was enabled to form a small class at this place. During this visit

to the island I received a message from Judge Dawson, requesting me to call upon him. I repaired to his residence, about thirty miles distant, and met with a warm reception. His first business was to assure me of his protection and assistance to forward my designs in the amelioration of the condition of the wretched sons and daughters of Adam. He laid before me the inefficiency and want of law, especially the importance of guarding against the unhallowed concubinage almost everywhere existing in his district. We petitioned the Legislature on this subject, praying for action, which met with success, and thus gained one more step toward civilization.

Having concluded my business with the Judge, I made for Opelousas, filling my appointments at several places by the way. At Hayes's settlement I met an interesting congregation, to whom I preached, read our rules, and exhorted them with many words to "flee from the wrath to come." After preaching several times, both night and day, I left for the Red River section of my work. Here I found an attentive people, and was somewhat encouraged. My next prominent point was the Catahoola settlement. I was enabled to form small classes at Brothers Wiggins and Bowie's. From this I returned to the island, and found the society in a good spiritual condition, some two or three having found peace with God. Having now my work before me, my soul was in it, and I was constantly engaged; and, I thank God, I had the pleasure of seeing a goodly number happily converted.\*

That mystery of the itinerancy—"forming a circuit"—is now before the reader, and he has made one "round" with the preacher, after the metes and bounds have been determined. The germs of churches and congregations have been planted, and they will grow. In time we shall see a log meeting-house, then a frame building follows, and then it may be a substantial brick. The large circuit will be divided and subdivided as population and membership increase; and Lasley's three weeks' circuit becomes a district, composed of a dozen or more circuits. Thus the cause extends.

With empty purses and well-worn apparel the two missionaries were relieved at the end of this year. The circuit about Clarksville, Tennessee, was grateful to the jaded Lasley; there he had a happy and successful time, and was ready for another missionary movement on the Ohio River at the next Conference. He finished his course with joy in 1857.† Bowman rejoiced in the blue-grass and big meetings of Kentucky once more.

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\* Letter of the Rev. Thomas Lasley, in the *Western Christian Advocate*, August 7, 1840.

† His grave is at McMinnville, Tennessee, where the veteran died on a visit to one of his children. Speaking of his end, and why he should die at that place, he said: "God will have it so, that these people may see how an old Methodist preacher can die."

Who next shall try hard, unyielding Louisiana? Bishop Asbury selects a man who has seen rough service. Heavy-browed, stout and broad-shouldered; witty and wise, and self-reliant; plain in dress, simple in wants, and zealous; tough in muscle and tender in heart—such was James Axley. He built the first meeting-house on the circuit, and his own hands hewed some of the logs of what was known as Axley's Chapel. He needed clothes, and his old friends sent him some money to buy them, but he spent it for flooring-plank. He wept afterward, talking of his trials.

One evening, after riding all day without dinner, he called at a house where the family consisted of a widow lady, a grown-up daughter, a number of children, and some servants, none of whom were religious. The lady and her family would not grant his request to remain overnight. No, he could not stay; they would have no such cattle about them. But he was loath to leave, for if defeated in obtaining lodging there, nothing remained for him but a berth in the woods, without food or shelter, in an inclement season of the year. As he lingered a little to warm himself and consider how he should manage to pass the night, the thought of his forlorn condition as a homeless stranger, without money or friends, came like a dark cloud over his mind. His sad cogitations proceeded in silence. Then, as was natural in the extremity, he turned his thoughts toward his Heavenly Father's house above, where he hoped some day to find a home free from the ills of mortal life. Being a little cheered with the prospect, without leave, introduction, or ceremony, he began to sing one of the songs of Zion in a strange land:

“Peace, troubled soul, thou need'st not fear;  
Thy great Provider still is near.  
Who fed thee last can feed thee still;  
Be calm, and sink into his will.”

As he proceeded his depressed feelings became elevated; the vision of faith ranged above and beyond the desolate wilderness he had just been contemplating as the place of his night's sojourn. The family were melted into tears; the lady called a servant, and ordered him to put the gentleman's horse into the stable, and the daughter added, “Be sure you feed him well.”

Axley was willing to leave at the end of one year, and was soon riding wide districts on the Wabash and the Nollichuckee. Next came John Henninger, practical, faithful, and fervent, and



everywhere else successful; then the amiable John S. Ford; but they are soon found in Tennessee and Carolina again. The visits of Harper and of the inspiring Sellers must have been helpful; but at the end of 1813 all the Methodism in Louisiana was represented by eighty-nine white members and ten colored.\*

The two missionaries on the Tombigbee are swung round from the extreme eastern to the extreme western boundaries of the Conference.† Nolley is sent to Attakapas and Shrock to Rapides. As the custom was, Nolley had appointments sent before him. The people, hungry for the word, assembled at a house where preaching was to be, and waited long; but the belated parson did not arrive until the congregation had despaired of his coming and, in the free-and-easy hospitality of the frontier, had gone to bed—pallets and mattresses and bear-skins covered the floor, and the heads only of his congregation were in sight. He stood before the fire, took his text, and preached to them. "Who knows," said he, "but some word may take effect?"

These two preachers held all of Louisiana this year that was occupied by Methodism. Nolley's saintly bearing and pastoral fidelity gained ground with the people, but could not tame the ruffian spirit. A sugar-planter once drove him away from his smoke-stack, where he craved to warm himself. Sons of Belial took him out of the pulpit at St. Martinsville, and were on their way to the bayou to duck him, when a strange Deborah was raised up: a stout negro woman armed with a hoe vigorously assailed them, and rescued the preacher out of their hands. Shrock, who in youth had been a blacksmith, pursued a defiant policy. An accident, or incident, befell certain lewd fellows who were known as brave disturbers of religious services. On the outskirts of Alexandria, they were teasing the inmates of a house—a couple of women not of the best character—who were honestly engaged at the time boiling soap. A gourdful of the scalding liquid left its mark upon a face or two, and the gallants became the jest of the village. Shrock was preaching afterward at the court-house, and the set appeared at the window, making grimaces and noises. He turned on them with the rebuke that if they did not mend their ways they were in danger of something hotter than boiling soap. The hit was

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\* Thus distributed—Attakapas, 65 white, 10 colored; Ouachita, 12 white; Rapides, 12 white. † They report 197 white members, and 54 colored in Alabama.

palpable; and they and their allies sent him word that on his return he should be ducked in the river. Shrock's few friends were concerned for his safety, and desired him to miss the next appointment. But he let it be known that, Providence permitting, he would be on hand when the time came; and he was—and a large crowd also. Moving straight to the Judge's seat, which served for a pulpit, he conducted a brief religious service, watching as well as praying. At the place where "notices" usually come in he called attention to the state of affairs; opened his sleeve and rolled it back, showing an arm of fearful muscular power. "Look at *that*," said he; "do you think my Master gave me such a means of defense for nothing?" He concluded by informing all concerned that he did not feel it to be his duty to submit to the shameful treatment Nolley had received at St. Martinsville. He gave out his next appointment, and added, "he understood the use of the court-house would probably be denied him thereafter; and if it was, that large cottonwood-tree on the commons, near the bank of the river, would answer his purpose, and he would preach there." Taking up his saddlebags and coat, he passed out. When near his horse he heard his name called, and turning round saw a man approaching him at a quick step. "Do you come as a friend or foe?" inquired the short, stout-built preacher, squaring himself. "I am your friend, Mr. Shrock," replied the man, and taking him cordially by the hand, continued: "I come to invite you to dine with me to-day, and hereafter to make my house your home in Alexandria. You are the very man we need here to manage these cowardly disturbers of our place of worship."

This citizen disclosed a view of the defect of Christian civilization then and there prevailing, and the heavy grade to be everywhere overcome by pioneer preachers. According to this view a disturbance of public worship is not an offense against the congregation, but against the preacher only. It is his business not only to preach to the people a free gospel, but to maintain the conditions for their hearing it.

The reports made at the Conference on Pearl River in 1814-15 were meager. The people who were not in the armies were sorely pressed by the embargo. There was a dearth of hymn-books, and the Conference authorized its President to make a selection of hymns, and publish the same in pamphlet form. "Sellers's

Selections of Hymns and Spiritual Songs" was soon in every church and household. There were elections to orders, but no ordinations; and Thomas Griffin acted as presiding elder one year before he was an elder.\* These and other war measures indicate the straits of the Methodists in the South-west, cut off from all communication, commercial and ecclesiastical, with their brethren and the rest of the world.

From the Conference Richmond Nolley was sent back to Attakapas—the membership had been increased by one-third the year before, and his return was desired. Thomas Griffin was assigned to Ouachita. Together they crossed the river, and traveled through the swamp. Then they parted with embraces and tears—Griffin going northward, and Nolley bending in the other direction. On the afternoon of November 25th, a cold and rainy day, he came to a fitful, swollen stream. From a village of Indians near the creek he procured a guide and proceeded to the ford, and leaving his valise and saddle-bags attempted to ride it. The current bore his horse down; the banks were steep and he could not get out. In the struggle he and his horse parted. He got hold of a bush and pulled himself out; his horse swam back to the shore from which they started. Directing the Indian to keep his horse till morning, and to bring him over with his baggage, he started for the nearest habitation, about two miles distant.

He had gone but a little way when the angels met him. With sweet surprise, Nolley found himself in the land of Beulah, though in a dreary swamp of Louisiana. Beholding the "shining ones," he doubtless exclaimed with him of old, "This is God's host!" Fancy must supply what history fails to record, for there were none present save those from the sky. It was Friday, his fast-day. Chilled and exhausted—the cold and darkness every moment becoming intenser—he sunk down about three-fourths of a mile from the ford. He seemed conscious of his approaching end. The prints of his knees were in the ground, showing what his last exercise had been. Having commended his soul to God, with what sense of the nearness of heaven it may be supposed, he had laid him down at the roots of a clump of pines. The itinerant preacher received his discharge. There he lay on

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\*The historian whose authority is best on the transactions of these years says: "The appointment was made with the understanding that he was not to administer the Lord's Supper." (J. G. Jones's MS.)



the cold ground and wet leaves, at full length, his eyes neatly closed, his left-hand on his breast and his right a little fallen off. The solitary spot and the gloomy surroundings were not incompatible with finishing his course with joy. Next day, the high water having fallen, the Indian crossed over and found on the road-side first the heavy over-coat that had been laid off, and next the corpse. It was taken to the house he was trying to reach, and the neighbors gathered to the burial on Sunday. Slowly the news reached the circuit and spread among the people. The effect was profound and conciliating.

Richmond Nolley was only thirty years old at his death, and had been preaching seven years. He kept his body under, perhaps to excess—not allowing it sufficient rest and food for the best working conditions. Every morning he was up at four o'clock—at prayer, at reading, at work. His emaciated frame offered excuses for relaxation, which he refused to accept. One said, "Your health must be very bad." "It is natural for me to look so," he replied; "on the contrary, I have the best of health." His manner seemed to say, "The Lord is at hand," "the Judge standeth at the door." Constitutional feebleness was upborne by a heavenly zeal.

It is not claimed that he was strong, or learned, or eloquent. He was not. Moral power is not in proportion to mental vigor; its elements lie above and beyond. What avails the clear and cold statement of truth—even divine truth—if it touch not the heart nor move the man? It is the evident sincerity, the home appeal, the word commended to the conscience of the hearer, the peroration all quivering with feeling, the *unction*, that constitutes the preacher's power. The soldier may have wisdom, but if he lack courage he is totally out of character. Neither can the counselor's courage stand him in the place of wisdom. Whatever the preacher may or may not be, without this one quality of moral power he is nothing. This had Nolley.

In the winter of 1815 Bishop McKendree sent John Lane and Ashley Hewit, from the Conference at Charleston, to the West. Passing by the scene of the Fort Mims massacre and many a charred cabin in the latter end of their journey, they crossed the Alabama River at Fort Claiborne. On the Tensas Hewit's circuit began, but his companion had yet three hundred miles to go. Lane was gentle and noble in form and spirit; so was his ministry in

the Lord for half a century. Marrying one of the daughters of Newit Vick, he passed his middle and old age in Vicksburg, graced with Christian labor and hospitality. Hewit spent the rest of his life mainly in Louisiana, and made many rich though he died poor.

The Conference of 1816 met at Pine Ridge, near Natchez. In an upper room of William Foster's double log-house the sessions were held. Its eight members included Elijah Gentry, Peter James, and Tommie Owens—home products. Despairing of the promised episcopal visitation, they were proceeding with business, when on Friday a horseman, slow and weary, rode up. Bishop Roberts never had a heartier greeting. He was in time to close up. On Saturday, when the list of elders elect was under consideration, Shrock was called before the Conference to give account of the Alexandria affair. If the exaggerated reports were true, his election might be canceled for unministerial conduct. He rehearsed the matter, in order, and was passed; but the Bishop thought he saw a little of the old Adam in his self-gratulatory spirit, and said, "Put up thy sword, Peter!" The tone and manner of the rebuke were long remembered by those present as most effective, and Shrock himself confessed to an instant and sensible shrinkage. On Sunday he held his first ordination. A multitude had come from a distance and, according to the manner of those times, there was an unbroken service of several hours' duration. Ex-president Sellers preached the opening sermon (Col. i. 28), and the deacons elect, who had been accumulating for three years, were ordained. The Bishop ascended the stand and preached (Jer. ix. 23, 24); and then, assisted by Sellers and Hewit, ordained to the order of elders Thomas Nixon, William Winans, and John Shrock.\* "The whole scene," says our local chronicler, "the first ever witnessed in Mississippi, was solemn and full of encouragement as to the future of the Church in this detached portion of the vineyard."

The membership had been decreasing for two years. At this date it was 1,706 white members, 540 colored.† Now the prospect widens. Cut off from help heretofore, they are henceforth

\*Thomas Griffin and John S. Ford had met Bishop Asbury at Bethlehem, Tennessee, the year before, and received elder's orders. The latter did not return.

† Distributed as follows: Mississippi, 1,289 whites, 402 colored; Alabama, 287 whites, 96 colored; Louisiana, 130 whites, 32 colored.

brought into Connectional sympathy. Bishop Roberts not only strengthened them by his labors and counsel, and by looking out places to which he at once transferred men from the older Conferences, but he brought them \$200 as their annual dividend from the profit of the Book Concern, and \$130 from the Charter Fund; whereas the whole of their Conference collection for the relief of the traveling preachers who had not got their disciplinary allowance was \$69. What a relief was this! Hewit had received \$60 for his year's work in the Tombigbee, and Owens had served Rapides for only \$39. Peter James had been on Nolley's last circuit, and received \$41; but out of the "Conference Fund" they were able to pay him \$59. Every man had fallen short, more or less, of his salary; but it was made up to the round, full ONE HUNDRED. Besides, two orphan children got \$48—and lo, they had a surplus of \$100, which they sent to their more needy brethren of the Missouri Conference, to help them out. They adjourned to meet in 1817, at Midway, when Bishop McKendree was with them. This year the western half of Mississippi was admitted as a State into the Union, and the eastern half set off as Alabama Territory. Louisiana had been admitted in 1812; a pretty large Conference—two States and a Territory.

In 1824 the Conference met in Tuscaloosa, and such appointments as Cahawba, Conecuh, and Marion indicate that the space between the Georgia and the Alabama frontiers is lessening. Ebenezer Hearn, from the cedar-brakes of Tennessee, is in position on a field which forms one of the fairest portions of the Church, and with the development of which his name is so worthily associated. First and last, as presiding elder or circuit preacher, he covered the whole ground from Attakapas to Chattahooche. With him are Levert, Abernathy, Clinton, Burpo, Dickinson, Pierson, Pipkin, and Patton. That courtly man, John C. Burruss, gave some years to Alabama; and so did Alexander Sale. By 1832 Alabama took its place among the Conferences; and in 1860 had on its roll 237 traveling preachers, over 46,000 white members, and 27,800 colored. As for Louisiana, at one time it was suggested in the Bishop's Council that it might be best to withdraw the preachers and appropriate their labors to a more promising field; and the subject was gravely discussed. Hewit interceded. "Was it sound policy," said he, "to lose what little



had been gained by so much privation and toil? What would become of those few sheep in the wilderness?" The conclusion was to appropriate two preachers to that field, and the appointments for 1818 stand thus: Louisiana District, Ashley Hewit, presiding elder; Attakapas, Thomas Nixon; Ouachita, Ashley Hewit. It was *two* preachers for years.

Hewit and one more bravely held the ground until help came. By conversion and immigration godly laymen and local preachers were gradually added; fresh and vigorous itinerants were thrown in; prospects brightened; in 1846 the Louisiana Conference was organized in the town of Opelousas; and in 1860 it had six districts, 89 traveling preachers, 10,222 white members, and 7,489 colored. Of this membership New Orleans reported 1,382 white and 1,937 colored; and Louisiana stood at the front in ministerial support and missionary offerings.

The mother Conference, having set off two others, in 1860 numbered 142 traveling preachers, and over 20,000 white members and 17,000 colored. And thus was Methodism planted in the South-west. In less than fifty years from the day Tobias Gibson landed at Natchez from his canoe, it had spread east and west, and down to the Gulf coast, and had entered the neighboring Republic of Texas—furnished with church-buildings, schools and colleges, and periodical literature; served by an able ministry, and wielding over all that land a social power and a religious influence unequaled by any other Church.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Missionary and Tract Societies Formed—African Churches Organized—Education—Joshua Soule Resigns an Election—Constitutional Questions—McKendree's Position—Methodist Protestants—Soule and Hedding Elected Bishops—Capers, Emory, Waugh, Bangs, Bascom, Fisk—Canada Methodism set off.

THE polity of Methodism engaged much attention from the General Conference of 1816 to that of 1828. Within this period may be dated the settlement of questions and the establishment of institutions that are important in the Church's history. A "Tract Society" was organized in 1817, in New York, by some creative minds, having opportunity for mutual coöperation, to aid in circulating cheap religious publications. It was closely identified with the Book Concern, which printed and circulated its issues, and at first kept its accounts without any other agency. This was in line with Wesley's policy of cheap and wholesome reading for the people—itinerant preaching by the press.

An effort to assist the Rev. Mark Moore in establishing the Church at New Orleans suggested to Joshua Soule, Nathan Bangs, Laban Clark, and Freeborn Garrettson the great movement of the period—the formation of a Missionary Society. The cry for help came up from other quarters also—the North-western fields and the newly-begun Indian Missions. Under special appeals from the Bishops, collections had been made for individual and local wants. Bishop Asbury had carried around a "mite subscription" for years, to raise money for the preachers who were distressed in their circumstances, traveling on frontier settlements and performing purely missionary work; and his last act, in his dying-chamber, was to request that the "mite subscription should be presented," but he was told that no strangers were present. Why not organize for help in general, and for a systematic collection and distribution? The labors of Methodists had been so largely missionary in their character that little had been thought of missions as understood by others. But now the societies at the centers were strong and the subject began to attract attention, and they organized a Missionary and Bible Society in the city of New York in 1819. This dual character was maintained for seventeen years, when the Bible depart-

ment of the society was eliminated in view of coöperating with the American Bible Society.

An interesting history is that of two large secessions of negro members which proved successful. The first occurred in Philadelphia, resulting in the "African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." The Preface to their Discipline, signed by their six bishops, says:

In November, 1787, the colored people belonging to the Methodist Society of Philadelphia convened together in order to take into consideration the evils under which they labored, arising from the unkind treatment of their white brethren, who considered them a nuisance in the house of worship, and even pulled them off their knees, while in the act of prayer, and ordered them to the back seats. For these, and various other acts of unchristian conduct, they considered it their duty to devise a plan in order to build a house of their own, to worship God under their own vine and fig-tree. In this undertaking they met with great opposition from an elder of the Methodist Church (J. McC.), who threatened that if they did not give up the building, erase their names from the subscription paper, and make acknowledgments for having attempted such a thing, in three months they should all be publicly expelled from the Methodist Society. Not considering themselves bound to obey this injunction, and being fully satisfied that they should be treated without mercy, they sent in their resignations.

Being now as outcasts, they had to seek for friends where they could, and the Lord put it into the hearts of Dr. Benjamin Rush, Mr. R. Ralston, and other respectable citizens, to interpose for them, both by advice and assistance, in getting their building finished. Bishop White also aided them, and ordained one from among themselves, after the order of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to be their pastor.\*

Legal difficulties were raised as to the control of their house and the government and revenues of the congregation. Bishop White failed to capture them, if he had any such proselyting design, and another turn was given to affairs:

In 1793 the number of the serious people of color having increased, they were of different opinions respecting the mode of religious worship, and, as many felt a strong partiality for that adopted by the Methodists, Richard Allen, with the advice of some of his brethren, proposed erecting a place of worship on his own ground, and at his own expense, as an African Methodist meeting-house. As soon as the preachers of the Methodist Church in Philadelphia came to a knowledge of this they opposed it with all their might, insisting that the house should be made over to the Conference or they would publish them in the newspapers as imposing on the public, as they were not Methodists. However, the building went on, and when finished, they invited Francis Asbury, then Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to open the house for divine service, which invitation he accepted, and the house was named Bethel. (See Gen. xxviii. 19.)

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\*The Doctrines and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. 2mo, pp. 332. A. M. E. Church Book Concern, Philadelphia. 1873.



The congregation—so says the historical Preface we are quoting—obtained from the Legislature, by petition, a supplemental charter intended to relieve them from the grievances of white government; but this “exasperated their opponents,” who “proposed supplying them with preaching if they would give six hundred dollars per year to the Methodist Society. The congregation not consenting, they fell to four hundred dollars; but the people were not willing to give more than two hundred dollars per year.” This price being agreed on, the African brethren soon had occasion to complain of the quality of service:

For this sum they [the whites] were to preach for them [the blacks] twice a week during the year. But it proved to be only six or seven times a year, and sometimes by such preachers as were not acceptable to the Bethel people, and not in much esteem among the Methodists as preachers. The Bethel people being dissatisfied with such conduct, induced the trustees to pass a resolution to give but one hundred dollars per year to the Methodist preachers. When a quarterly payment of the last sum was tendered it was refused and sent back, insisting on the two hundred dollars, or they would preach no more for them. At this time they pressed strongly to have the supplement repealed; this they could not comply with.

Richard Allen had been a Southern slave; but, self-redeemed, he was doing a thrifty mechanic’s business and had accumulated property in Philadelphia. The white brethren now tried a counter movement: they fixed up a house “not far from Bethel,” and “an invitation was given to all who desired to be Methodists to resort thither.” But the new house failed to draw. The historical Preface continues:

Being disappointed in this plan, Robert R. Roberts, the resident elder of St. George’s charge, came to Bethel and insisted on preaching to them and taking the spiritual charge, for they were Methodists. He was told he should come on some terms with the trustees; his answer was that he did not come to consult with Richard Allen nor the trustees, but to inform the congregation that on next Sabbath-day he would come and take the charge. They told him he could not preach for them under existing circumstances. However, at the appointed time he came, but having taken previous advice, they had their preacher in the pulpit when he came, and the house so fixed that he could not get more than half-way to the pulpit. Finding himself disappointed, he appealed to those who came with him as witnesses, that “that man,” meaning the preacher, “had taken his appointment.”

Several respectable white citizens (who knew the colored people had been ill used) were present, and told them not to fear, for they would see them righted, and not suffer Roberts to preach in a forcible manner; after which Roberts went away.

The next elder stationed at Philadelphia was Robert Birch, who, following the example of his predecessor, came and published a meeting for himself; but the aforementioned method was adopted, and he had to go away disappointed. In consequence of this he applied to the supreme court for a writ of *mandamus*, to know why the pulpit was denied him, being an elder. This brought on a lawsuit, which ended in favor of Bethel.

The Rev. John Emory, in 1814, by a circular letter, disowned pastoral responsibility for them, which the African brethren thought a disowning of them. They called a general convention of colored Methodists in April, 1816, to organize, and "taking into consideration their grievances, and in order to secure their privileges and promote union among themselves, it was resolved that the people of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and all other places who should unite with them, should become one body under the name and style of the 'African Methodist Episcopal Church.'" Richard Allen was their first bishop. He has had some able successors, the majority of whom were born and converted in slavery.\* The African Methodist Episcopal Church is the largest negro Church in the world, and well organized. Their doctrines and discipline are closely modeled on the old Methodist Episcopal plan. Pretty soon the colored Methodists in the city of New York declared for independence. They struck out a different plan, and organized the "African Methodist Episcopal (Zion's) Church," to be governed by bishops quadrennially elected, but not set apart by the usual forms of ordination. Their local church was Zion; hence they are called Zionites, in distinction from Bethelites. The two are nearly equal in numbers.†

The General Conference of 1820 strongly approved the Missionary and the Tract Societies, and made them Connectional. The troubles growing out of the presence of Wesleyan mis-

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\*He died in 1831; but the denomination has had a succession of able superintendents, some of whom have been remarkable for administrative talent and pulpit eloquence. Of its eight bishops, three of whom have died, all were slaves except one. In the United States they have (in 1867) ten Conferences, 550 preachers, including five bishops, but exclusive of 1,500 local preachers, and about 200,000 members. They have Church property to the amount of \$4,000,000, a Book Concern in Philadelphia, a weekly newspaper, and a college in Ohio. (Stevens's *History of the M. E. Church*, Vol. IV.)

† There were about 840 Africans in the [New York] city Methodist churches in 1818, but in 1821 only 61 remained. (Ibid.) To these organizations Methodism at the North, in fact if not in form, relegated the religious instruction of the negroes for a half century. They have, in later years, spread through the South.

sionaries in Canada grew worse, and the Bishops were empowered to send a delegate to confer with the British Methodists on the subject. John Emory accordingly visited England on this business, and brought it to an amicable issue. Lower Canada became connected with the English Methodists, and Upper Canada retained its former connection with Episcopal Methodism; each body withdrawing all its preachers from the other's ground, and agreeing in no way to interfere therewith. Emory bore a fraternal letter to the British Conference proposing an interchange of delegates with that body, which was accepted, and Revs. Messrs. Reece and Hannah appeared as fraternal messengers from British to American Methodism at the next General Conference. John Emory was a native of Maryland, and bred to the bar, which he left, with the brightest prospects, for the ministry. His father, though a Methodist, was so grieved at the sacrifice which his gifted and promising son made, that for a long time he would not hear him preach. He was a polished shaft, capable of any service, the most difficult or laborious; and this, his first public service for the Church, was so admirably performed that the eyes of all were upon him henceforth.

The year 1820 marks the renewal of interest in education. It was recommended that district schools and colleges be established, and the Bishops were authorized to appoint presidents, principals, or teachers, to all such establishments. "But," says a writer, "this was not effected without some opposition. Though the Church owed so much to the learning of its founders, some did not realize the importance of education. This may be attributed in part to the superior success of our preachers in the absence of literary training, over that of others who had been professionally educated for the work."

During the next four years Augusta College was founded in Kentucky, under the patronage of the Kentucky and Ohio Conferences, being the first college successfully organized after the failure at Abingdon and Bethel. A number of useful and distinguished men were employed and educated in its halls.

It was agreed that an additional bishop was needed. Joshua Soule, then Book Agent, received forty-seven votes out of eighty-eight, and was elected; Nathan Bangs received thirty-eight. Six days afterward, resolutions on the election of presiding elders, similar to those rejected by previous General Conferences,



were adopted. Thereupon Joshua Soule, for whose consecration the time had been fixed, addressed to the Bishops a note saying:

In consequence of an act of the General Conference, passed this day, in which I conceive the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church is violated, and that episcopal government, which has heretofore distinguished her, greatly enervated, by a transfer of executive power from the episcopacy to the several Annual Conferences, it becomes my duty to notify you, from the imposition of whose hands only I can be qualified for the office of superintendent, that under the existing state of things I cannot, consistently with my convictions of propriety and obligation, enter upon the work of an itinerant general superintendent.

The matter was brought into the Conference, where it was "moved that Brother Soule be, and hereby is, respectfully requested to withdraw his resignation, and submit to the wishes of his brethren in being ordained a bishop." This prevailed, forty-nine voting for it. When this was stated to Joshua Soule he still insisted upon "resigning his election." His opinions were well known, and he had been elected by a majority of nine over Dr. Bangs, who (though he changed his views afterward on that point) was a representative of the other party.

It seems that Bishop George held an interview with the special committee of six (three from each side) who were seeking for a compromise or accommodation plan to settle a question that was continually obtruding itself. Some of the opponents of change got the impression that the resolutions, as slightly amended, were divested of their unconstitutional features, and being weary of strife, for peace's sake, they either voted for them or declined to oppose them, and they were adopted without debate by a vote of sixty-one to twenty-five.

The situation of Joshua Soule, who had been strong and decided heretofore, kept him silent pending the question. Hearing of this action Bishop McKendree, who had retired into the country for rest until the ordination, returned to the city and called the Bishops together. He expressed to them his decided conviction that the action was in violation of the third Restrictive Rule, as it changed the plan of the general superintendency. Bishop Roberts concurred with him in this view, but did not wish to make any personal opposition. Bishop George declined to express any opinion as to its infringement of the constitution, but expressed himself in favor of what had been done. The majority of the Conference, finding that their action had been taken in a misunderstanding, voted to suspend the resolu-

tions for four years, and they directed the Bishops to administer under the Discipline as it had previously stood.

Joshua Soule adhering to his position, the Bishops requested that another election be held, as they needed an additional colleague. The majority expressed their purpose to reëlect Soule, and the minority finding them resolute, "protested," and petitioned the Bishops to withdraw their request and let the election be deferred for four years. Whereupon Bishops George and Roberts agreed to perform the extra labor.

The working of a system discloses its weaknesses and its strength. A defect in the constitution of 1808 now appeared: How shall it be determined whether an act of the General Conference is contrary to, or in conflict with, the Restrictive Rules? Before the session concluded, an effort was made to establish a method by which the constitutionality of measures could be properly tested. A resolution was passed recommending the Annual Conferences so to alter the Discipline that if a majority of the Bishops judged a measure unconstitutional they should return it to the General Conference with their objections within three days, and a majority of two-thirds should be required for its final passage. This resolution, however, was not concurred in by the Annual Conferences. The same fate met a similar effort four years later. This want of a constitutional test must be supplied sooner or later—by the civil, if not by the Church, courts.\*

Having no other resort Bishop McKendree addressed the Annual Conferences. He was more concerned to save the constitution than to save any part of the government protected by the constitution. Fully persuaded that the action taken was inexpedient and unwise, yet if it must be done let it be done according to the fundamental law. Therefore, for the twofold reasons of harmony and legality, he recommended to the Annual Conferences such an alteration of the third Restrictive Rule as would

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\*This want was not supplied until 1870, when the following amendment was made to the constitution by the General Conference voting 160 yeas to 4 nays, and the Annual Conferences concurring by 2,024 yeas to 9 nays: "When any rule or regulation is adopted by the General Conference which, in the opinion of the Bishops, is unconstitutional, the Bishops may present to the Conference which passed said rule or regulation their objections thereto, with their reasons, in writing, and if the General Conference shall, by a two-thirds vote, adhere to its action on said rule or regulation, it shall then take the course prescribed for altering a Restrictive Rule." (*Proviso in Discipline M. E. Church, South.*)

allow the suspended resolutions to be adopted.\* Seven out of twelve gave judgment against the resolutions as unconstitutional, but recommended such a change in the Restrictive Rule as would let them pass. The other five Annual Conferences refused to take action because it would imply that a majority of the General Conference had not full power to act finally, and they expected to have that majority in the next session.†

However, the elections preceding the session of 1824 showed that the majority of delegates chosen were opposed to the contemplated alterations. Accordingly, May 24th, the following

\*For the text of this Rule see foot-note, page 513.

†The views of Bishop McKendree may be thus summed up: It is the duty of the Bishops, as general superintendents, to carry into effect the laws made by the General Conference; therefore, they are elected by that body, and amenable to it for their moral and official conduct. In this way uniformity may be preserved throughout the Annual Conferences, and errors in the administration corrected; while the administration, even from the very extremities of the work, through the responsibility of the General Superintendents, is brought under the inspection and control of the General Conference.

The presiding elder, ever since the office was constituted in 1792, is the agent or assistant of a Bishop; is part of the executive government; and in his district is authorized to discharge all the duties of the absent Bishop, except ordination. The authority by which the Bishop is enabled "to oversee the business of the Church" consists largely, therefore, in the power of appointing the presiding elders. In case they should neglect or refuse to do their duty, as laid down in the Discipline, it becomes the duty of the General Superintendent to remove such from office, and supply their places with others who will carry out the law. But if the presiding elders are elected by the various Annual Conferences, they may counteract the General Superintendent, or clash with each other, administering law differently in different places. How could the General Conference then hold the Bishop responsible for the perversion or contempt of its laws? One Annual Conference may sustain a presiding elder in an administration for which another Annual Conference would condemn him. The General Conference, in thus transferring executive power from the General Superintendents to the Annual Conferences, effectually destroys its own power of regulating the general administration; and the connection between making laws and executing them ceases.

But if the Church is minded to have it so, the constitution ought first to be changed; for the general superintendency that was placed under the protection of its Third Article is essentially different from what this new rule would make it. Otherwise, the senior Bishop insisted that not the episcopacy alone was involved, but every interest which the constitution was meant to guard was liable to be overridden by the power of a mere majority vote. Such a precedent, he concluded, "would effectually divest the members of our Church of all constitutional security for their rights, and reduce them to the necessity of depending entirely on the wisdom and goodness of the General Conference for those inestimable blessings."



preamble and resolution were moved and considered in the General Conference:

Whereas a majority of the Annual Conferences have judged the resolutions making presiding elders elective, and which were passed and then suspended at the last General Conference, unconstitutional: therefore,

*Resolved*, That the said resolutions are not of authority, and shall not be carried into effect.

The vote was taken by ballot—sixty-three in favor and sixty-one against it, and the motion was pronounced “sustained.”

But the ghost would not down, and near the close of the session the “resolutions” were declared to be “unfinished business,” and suspended until the next General Conference.

The field was enlarging and the health of the senior Bishop was becoming more feeble; therefore, on May 26th two additional bishops were elected—Joshua Soule and Elijah Hedding.\*

The next four years were marked by agitation. American Methodism had two irrepressible questions—an English heritage—that could not be settled inside the body. One, about this time, worked out of it; and the other, twenty years later, divided it. The English plan of making appointments was never suited to America. There, one Conference, which is both Annual and General, meets in a small territory; remote stations and circuits can communicate with it during its sessions; and people can object to proposed appointments as well as preachers. The chairmen of districts, though elected, are held annually responsible to the central law-making Conference for carrying out its rules and regulations. Here, a very small number of stations and circuits can communicate with an Annual Conference while in session. The preachers might have an opportunity of discussing proposed appointments, but the people would not. Moreover, while with us there are many Annual Conferences, there is only one General Conference having power to make laws which meets once in four years, and administers or executes its laws through general superintendents, or Bishops, elected by it and amenable to it for their moral and official conduct. Presiding elders (corresponding to chairmen of districts), who assist in executing

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\* 128 votes were given, of which Joshua Soule had 64, William Beauchamp 62, Elijah Hedding 61, John Emory 59. On balloting the second time 128 votes were given, of which Joshua Soule had 65, Elijah Hedding 64, William Beauchamp 62, John Emory 58. John Emory withdrew his name, and Elijah Hedding was elected on the third ballot.

laws, are amenable only to their Annual Conferences. Yet upon an American Conference system, that had grown up so different from the English, by reason of social facts and continental distances, there was a persistent effort from the beginning to ingraft the English idea. O'Kelley began it, encouraged by the knowledge of Dr. Coke's sympathy; and the latter obtruded the subject upon every opportunity, after O'Kelleyism had signally failed. The end of the strife comes now in a formidable secession. The discussion on electing presiding elders led to discussions as to the rights of local preachers, for they claimed that when officers were to be elected they had a right, in some way, to take part. The excitement spread to the membership, who suggested that their rights should be represented when class-leaders were appointed, and when changes were proposed in Church economy. And all malcontents found utterance in a very vigorous paper called *Mutual Rights*. "In its pages inflammatory articles were published, and severe attacks were made upon the economy of the Church. The English system was represented as superior to the American, and it was claimed that the excitement was sweeping over the Church." The combination was a threatening one. "Union Societies" were formed among the members who favored reform, both to spread their principles and to support each other in case of prosecution by the Church.

Of course, as Baltimore had been the seat of every General Conference except one, the commotion was greatest there. Her preachers and people had been entertained with so many discussions on the evils of Church economy that the dissatisfied element was readily organized. Bishops and presiding elders were denounced as tyrants, and the people were invited to contend for their rights. In 1827 a convention was called in Baltimore, which laid down a platform of principles and appointed a committee with authority to call a second convention when they should deem it advisable.

Strong memorials—demands—were addressed to the ensuing General Conference, which met for the first time west of the Alleghany Mountains, in the city of Pittsburg. But by this time the conservative elements had rallied against the destructive rush of threatened revolution. Even lay delegation, the last plank and the most popular one in the new platform, could not then be considered with the favor which it received at a later

day. The temper on both sides, in the greatly widened controversy, was unfavorable to concession. The reformers were aggressive and hopeful, for several reasons. They believed their cause just; it was favored by the political tendency of the country; an envious element of sectarianism which once existed in other denominations, and was ever ready to humble Methodism, was forward and loud to encourage disaffection; but chiefly they miscalculated as to the final adhesion of men who had, at one time or other, expressed views in sympathy with their own. Even Bascom uttered some sentiments, in the heyday of his blood, which were not in harmony with his maturer life as one of the strongest, steadiest, and most trusted leaders of Episcopal Methodism the Church has ever had. Hedding leaned that way once, on the original question, and Bangs and Waugh. Emory criticised and antagonized Bishop McKendree and Joshua Soule for the prompt, resolute means they used to save the constitution. Bishop George, in judicial weakness, and Bishop Roberts, by amiable irresolution, in the primary movement let the ship drive. But now, when the radical tendencies of these things were seen, the conservatives closed ranks and stood firm. The report of the General Conference, made by John Emory, was kind, strong, and conclusive, and put an end to the hopes of the reformers, who proceeded to the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church. Some who originally favored modifications, so soon as the proposed measures, which lay at the bottom, had been declared unconstitutional, declined further agitation. Methodism had been demonstrated a most efficient plan for spreading the gospel. Practically it had never oppressed them; if any were oppressed it was the class who did not complain but were complained against—the itinerant preachers. Thoughtful men must not be counted on to join in a theoretical and destructive reform because every pin and screw in the tabernacle that has sheltered them is not exactly to their notion. Unfortunately a reform which began in principles drifted largely into personalities. “The most ungracious assault,” says a writer well informed in the literature of that day, “was that which was made upon Bishop George. Such, generally, is the lot of those who, while favoring partial changes, adhere to the vital principles of an organization. They must either go with the reformers to the point of destruction, or be regarded as traitors to their interests.”



Into the Methodist Protestant Church, at Baltimore, Pittsburg, and Cincinnati, and several other places, went many of the best and wealthiest laymen of the old Church; and not a few ministers (mostly local) of ability and high character cast their lot with them—Asa Shinn, Nicholas Snethen (“the silver trumpet” of Bishop Asbury), Cornelius Springer, and more. A pure doctrine has been ministered at its altars; and while the denomination has not prospered, not a few bright examples of devout congregations and of personal piety have adorned it. Its ministry and press have never been without strong men, and the members have been generous. Its polity is marked with an extreme jealousy of power, which is lodged nowhere, but “distributed;” and there are guards and balances and checks. A brake on the wheels of a railroad-train is a good thing to keep from going too fast; but a railroad-train, constructed on the principle of a brake, will not go at all. This honor justly belongs to the Methodist Protestant Church: its one good, peculiar principle—lay delegation—has in late years been incorporated into the chief Methodist bodies of Europe and America.

An irrepressible cause of discontent and schism was thus removed by a secession which carried with it ministers and members who were followed by sincere regret. Then the Church had rest for a season, and entered upon an era of unprecedented prosperity. Accessions made up for secessions, and showed an increase in ministers and members every year.\*

In 1820 American had agreed with British Methodism on a dividing line, giving up Lower Canada to them and taking Upper Canada; and each, by compact, withdrew from the other's territory. Upper Canada—hitherto divided in its territory between Genesee and New England Conferences—petitioned to be set up as an Annual Conference in 1824; and this was done, making the seventeenth. In 1828 the five delegates of the Canada Conference were in their seats at Pittsburg, representing

\* From 1820 to 1824 the increase in membership was 71,642. The membership during the next *quadrennium* increased 42,646. In 1829 there was an increase of 29,305, and in 1830 an increase of 28,410, besides the loss of the Canada Conference. The increase during 1831 was 37,114, and in 1832 it was 35,479, making in the four years from 1828 to 1832—the chief period of secession—an increase in ministers from 1,642 to 2,200, and in members from 418,438 to 548,593, being more than 130,000 in the four years—the largest increase the Church had ever realized in the same period. (Simpson's Hundred Years, etc.)

nine thousand six hundred and seventy-eight members, with valuable Church property. They and other memorialists represented that great inconvenience was experienced on account of their being under a foreign government. Prejudices growing out of this hindered them, and they asked for the connection to be dissolved. The jurisdiction of the General Conference was accordingly withdrawn, and they were authorized to form themselves into a separate Church, and their proportional interest in the Book Concern and Chartered Fund was provided for. A resolution was also adopted that if the Canada Conference should declare itself a separate Church and elect a superintendent, our Bishops should ordain him. In October, 1828, the Conference held its annual session, under the presidency of Bishop Hedding, and formed itself into the Canada Methodist Episcopal Church, adopting the Discipline as its basis. The Bishop congratulated them and gave them his blessing. It is pleasant to record an instance of regular separation after three stormy secessions. A union was effected, in 1833, with the Wesleyan Church of Great Britain. Several ministers and members, dissatisfied with this action, reorganized the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, and maintained their separate existence until the late general union.

The *Christian Advocate* had been started in New York in 1826, and shortly before that the *Wesleyan Journal*, in Charleston. The two were merged. The General Conference of 1828 elected Nathan Bangs editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*; John Emory was elected Book Agent, and Beverly Waugh assistant.

In 1824 the General Conference instructed the Bishops to appoint a fraternal delegate to the British Conference. They met in Baltimore in 1826 to do this. Bishops McKendree and Soule nominated Dr. William Capers: Bishops George and Hedding objected that he was a slave-holder, and nominated Dr. Wilbur Fisk. Neither side would yield, and the election was postponed. Next year Bishop Roberts was present—the other Bishops were still of the same mind, and as he would not take the responsibility of giving the casting vote, the matter went by default, and was referred back to the General Conference. Dr. William Capers, of South Carolina, was chosen.\*

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\* May 17 the Conference took up "the order of the day, to elect a delegate to the British Conference." Two ballots were had. On the first, Capers received 75, and Fisk 67; on the second, Capers received 82, and Fisk 72.

He loved home and his Church-work, but wrote to his wife on the day the "undesirable distinction" was conferred: "I could not decline being a candidate, for reasons which you know; and besides the important principle, involving the interests generally of all the Southern preachers, I could not decline because of the unpleasant dilemma in which it would have placed those of the Bishops who had so perseveringly maintained my nomination." Writing again from New York, before taking ship:

I wish you could have heard last night how Brother Waugh, concluding the service after I had preached, prayed for ~~me~~, and for you, and our dear children also; and how many loud amens rang through the church. I had a blessed day yesterday—Sunday. My mouth was opened, and my heart enlarged, and the congregations seemed to feel pretty generally a correspondent interest in the services. As I said before so let me repeat, we know not what the Divine will may be, but let us lose ourselves in God and we shall infallibly come out on the right and best side. If we fully purpose in our hearts that "whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord," he will take care—our conduct being consistent—that "we live and die the Lord's."

Dr. Capers was the first fraternal delegate from American Methodism to the British Wesleyans, and none more fit for such an embassy has ever followed. The Conference at City Road presented "their warmest thanks" to him "for the great ability, Christian spirit, and brotherly kindness with which he has discharged the duties of his honorable mission," and to "the Methodist Episcopal Church in America for the appointment of their excellent representative, who had confirmed their feelings of respect and attachment toward their American brethren at large."



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

Indian Missions Established—Wyandots, Muskogeas, Choctaws, Cherokees, Flat-heads—The Indian Mission Conference—Missions to Negro Slaves—The Beginning and Progress of Plantation Missions: Difficulties of this Work.

The servile progeny of Ham  
Seize as the purchase of thy blood;  
Let all the heathen know thy name:  
From idols to the living God  
The wand'ring Indian tribes convert,  
And shine in every pagan heart.

(Charles Wesley.)

JOHN and Charles Wesley came to America to convert the Indians, but died without the sight. None have been so successful as Wesleyans in converting "the wandering tribes."

In 1815, while Marcus Lindsey was preaching in Marietta, Ohio, John Stewart passed by—the negro who went out as the first missionary among the Wyandot Indians. Stewart, in one of his drunken fits, had started to the river to drown himself. On his way he had to pass by the place where Lindsey was holding meeting, and being attracted by the sound, he stood at the door, where he could hear all that was said. The preacher was describing the lost sinner's condition, exposed to death and hell; and then he presented the offer of mercy—Jesus died for all, and the worst of sinners might find pardon. The Spirit, by his word, arrested Stewart there, and turned his feet from the way of death to the path of life. He was much engaged in reading the Bible and in prayer for weeks. Long fasting and vigils were broken by a vision. Whether awake or asleep he could not say, but he professed to have heard a voice saying, "You must go in a north-westerly direction to the Indian Nation, and tell the savage tribes of Christ your Saviour."\* On the Upper Sandusky he found, among the wigwams of the Wyandots, a negro, Jonathan Pointer, who had been captured on the Kanawha when a boy, and who acted as his interpreter. His first congregation consisted of an old Indian, "Big Tree," and an aged Indian woman.

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\* Finley's Sketches of Western Methodism.

Mary. Stewart could sing well, and with Pointer's help he made his message understood. He refused "fire-water," was given to prayer and preaching, and soon had a dominant influence over the clan. His first congregation was converted, and his converts multiplied. The matter was noised abroad. In 1819 the Ohio Conference sent James Montgomery to help him, both being under the presiding eldership of James B. Finley. Finley, a North Carolinian, had early gone to the North-west, and was long a leading character there. He nursed the Indian Mission wisely for years, and earned, by his looks and labors, the *sobriquet* of "Chief." A school was established, and a heroic woman, Harriet Stubbs, sister-in-law of Judge McLean, went to their aid as teacher of Indian girls. "She possessed," says Finley, "more courage and fortitude than any one of her age and sex that I have been acquainted with. In a short time the intrepid female missionary was the idol of the whole nation. They looked upon her as an angel messenger sent from the spirit land to teach them the way to heaven. They called her the 'pretty redbird.'"

Finley, Elliott, Henkle, and other preachers, labored among the scattered tribes. Stewart died in the faith in 1823. In 1820 converted Wyandots bore the news of their evangelization to a kindred tribe—the Ojibways—in Canada. Two Indian preachers went thither, and twelve years later there were ten aboriginal missionary stations in Upper Canada, with nearly 2,000 adult Indian members, and 400 youths were receiving instruction in eleven schools; and the names of John Sunday, Peter Jones, and other native evangelists were known at home and abroad.\*

Bishops McKendree and Soule visited these missions in 1824. Finley met them at Columbus and conducted them to the scene. They were delighted at the change which had resulted from the labors of the missionaries among the Wyandots, both in their temporal and spiritual condition. Their religion had consisted of paganism and some of the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church. They had kept up their feasts, songs, and dances; and so strong was their belief in witchcraft that numbers had been put to death as witches. Drunkenness, poverty, and misery abounded. But now a large majority had renounced their old faith and practices. Many had joined the Church, and were

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\* Histories of Bangs, Finley, and Strickland.

attentive to the means of grace; among them five leading chiefs—Big Tree, Between-the-Logs, Menoncue, Hicks, and Peacock. Big Tree was the first convert of his tribe; Between-the-Logs became a powerful preacher, but Menoncue excelled him in the peculiar aboriginal eloquence:

The habits of Christian social and domestic life prevailed. At the manual labor mission-school a fine farm was in operation, supplying abundantly the wants of the mission family and school with corn, wheat, oats, rye, flax, and a variety and profusion of vegetables. The neighboring Indians were imitating this model establishment. On the Sabbath both of the Bishops preached to a large assembly, through the interpreter. By appointment they met a number of the leaders of the nation. Bishop McKendree, after addressing them, invited them to inform him of their views in relation to the mission and the general interests of the nation. Menoncue, Punch, Gray Eyes, Peacock, Between-the-Logs, Driver, Washington, and Big Tree, replied. They gratefully adverted to the change in the creed, manners, morals, and condition, which had resulted from the mission, and earnestly asked that it might be continued. Bishop McKendree continued visiting from house to house, attended by an interpreter, explaining experimental religion and enforcing its practical precepts. On the 14th of August they left, impressed and delighted with the visit. Bishop Soule, who had never before been among the Indians, was especially surprised and pleased; and both of them, through the remainder of their lives, often adverted to the scene, which seemed to linger in their memories like the echo of an enchanting song.\*

The next enterprise was a mission to the Creek Indians, occupying at that time lands in Georgia and Alabama, east and west of the Chattahooche River. In 1821 Dr. Capers was selected by Bishop McKendree to set on foot this mission. He was then making the first successful effort to replant Methodism in Savannah. He set out on horseback on an extensive tour of appointments, for the purpose of awakening public attention to the moral and religious improvement of this tribe of Indians, who occupied the western frontier of the Conference. Contributions were solicited for the purpose of erecting mission premises and establishing a school; and the project, in the hands of so eloquent an advocate, met with general favor. He visited the Creek Agency and had an interview with the celebrated half-breed chief McIntosh, who, according to stately etiquette, though he understood English, would communicate with Dr. Capers only through an interpreter.

Asbury Manual Labor School was located at Fort Mitchell, near the present city of Columbus, and Dr. Capers, that he

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\* Paine's Life and Times of McKendree.



might the better superintend it, was for 1823-24 stationed in Milledgeville. There were many adversaries, but the school continued for several years. Isaac Smith, whom we met last on Edisto, founding the Church there, consented, in his sixty-first year, to teach the Indians also. In his house Capers made his first public prayer, and he and two others entertained the South Carolina Conference at its first meeting in Camden. He won the affections of the red men, and in 1829 there were reported seventy-one members at the Asbury Station, and the school consisted of fifty scholars. In 1830 the mission was discontinued. The labor was not lost, since many of the Indians, after their removal beyond the Mississippi River, were gathered into the fold of Christ, and traced their religious impressions to Father Smith and his associates and successors, Andrew Hammill, Daniel G. McDaniel, Matthew Raiford, and Whitman C. Hill.\*

The evangelization of the Choctaws and Chickasaws—kindred and adjoining tribes—was like a nation being born in a day. Rev. Alexander Talley† appears as missionary to Pensacola and Mobile as early as 1822. Subsequently he presided over the Louisiana District. In 1827 he was appointed missionary to the Indians in North Mississippi, and with tent and interpreter he set himself to the work. The interpreter (an Indian) shrunk from appearing before large crowds, and this confined the missionary to mere groups. He pitched his tent among small settlements, invited them to come and hear the “good talk,” and he taught the groups that gathered, and passed on. The teaching was direct—the fall of man, sin, redemption in Christ, repentance and love and obedience. He called for a turning to the Lord instantly. Before he got round in detail the chief, Leflore, sent for him, courteously entreated him, and made the teacher welcome to head-quarters. Years before, a French trader, Leflore, had settled on the Natchez trace, married an Indian, grown wealthy, and had a numerous progeny of sons and daughters. Greenwood Leflore, the oldest son, had been educated among the whites, was

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\* Of the number is Samuel Checote, elected Chief of the Creek Nation in their present home (Indian Territory), in 1867, for four years, and twice re-elected. He is the leading member of the Indian Mission Conference, and has often served as presiding elder. Checote was at Father Smith's school when a youth, and remembers him, though now sixty-six years old.

† One of three preacher-brothers—Nicholas and John W. being the other two.

principal chief of the nation, and Talley's interpreter upon occasions; and a more fluent and eloquent one, according to accounts, missionary never had. One of the first reform movements was to suppress the whisky traffic. The ordinance passed in council was duly guarded by penalty: "The offender was to be struck a hard lick on the head with a stick, and his whisky poured out on the ground." A self-willed brave defied the law—Offa-homa (Red-dog)—and met the penalty; for they were in earnest. A camp-meeting was held, and Captain Offa-homa, with a deep scar unhealed on his scalp, was among the first to appear. The Leflore family, the most intelligent and influential in the nation, and the common people, were brought under religious influence, and a spiritual power pervaded the tribe. The venerable Isaac Smith came up from the Muskogee School—Asbury—and his word and manner, emphasized by his gray hairs, made an uncommon impression. As he uttered paragraphs of Bible truth enough to save a world, Leflore, standing by his side, would interpret to the multitude seated and standing around. The interpreter enlarged on his text and wept; the people wept. A young preacher was present; in old age he describes the scene. He "had just read the first volume of Watson's Institutes, and thought the argument in favor of the divine origin of Christianity fine; but as he sat there among those untutored men and women, melted and weeping profusely under the word as the Holy Spirit applied it, he felt that the strongest argument for the gospel's divinity was before him. His own heart was strangely warmed, and he was more than ever determined thereafter to preach nothing but the pure, unadorned gospel of Jesus Christ, since that alone is the power of God unto salvation."

Alexander Talley took a delegation of Indian converts to the Annual Conference which met at Tuscaloosa in 1828. After his report was read the Conference requested that one of the Indians might give an account of the work of grace and the prospects of the nation. Captain Washington responded through the interpreter. The Conference was powerfully moved. Bishop Soule rose from the chair, shook the hand of the chief, and welcomed him and his people to the church, and exclaimed, "Brethren, the Choctaw Nation is ours! No—I mistake; the Choctaw Nation is Jesus Christ's!"\*

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\* J. G. Jones's MS. History. The historian was present.

Revs. R. D. Smith and Moses Perry were sent to Talley's help. The Indian work spread and prevailed, and was divided into circuits. The "falling exercise" was as common among these Indians as it had been in the Kentucky and Tennessee revival of 1800. Before the removal of the tribes to the West—1830-32—over three thousand Choctaw and Chickasaw members were added to the Church. Moses Perry married into the tribe, and accompanied them to their reservation beyond the Mississippi.

"The work of the Spirit," says our historian and witness, "was deep. We have witnessed among no people more marked awakenings, conversions, and subsequent developments of Christian experience than we have found among the Choctaws."

In 1822 the Rev. Richard Neely, of the Tennessee Conference, commenced to preach to the Cherokees in North Alabama, a nation more advanced than the Creeks. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had conducted missionary operations among them since 1817. Under Neely's preaching a class of thirty-three members was formed. At the following session of the Conference the Rev. A. J. Crawford was appointed missionary to the Cherokees and, with the approval of the chiefs in that part of the nation, opened a school which met with favor. Revivals of religion followed, and at the Conference of 1823 one hundred and eight members were reported. The work continued to grow, notwithstanding the political disturbances to which the tribe was subjected, until in 1830 there were eight hundred and fifty-five members of the Church, and five schools with about one hundred pupils. John Fletcher Boot and Turtle Fields and Blackbird were noted native preachers, though after the removal West a number were raised up whose influence was great—Carey, Standing-man, and others.

In 1832-33 the Conference, being met in St. Louis, received a remarkable call from the Flat Head Indians of Oregon. By some means they had heard that the white men had a book which told about the Great Spirit and another world. They sent a delegation across the Rocky Mountains to find the book and to ask for

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\* The Cherokee Mission stands thus in the Minutes of the Tennessee Conference for 1827: William McMahon, Superintendent of Indian Mission; Will's Valley, Greenberry Garrett; Oostahnahla, Turtle Fields; Echota, James J. Trott; Ooethkellogee, Greenville T. Henderson; Creek Path, John B. McFerrin; Chatoga, Allen F. Scruggs; Salakowa, Dickson C. McLeod.



a teacher. They made known their wants; the intelligence was published throughout the country, and three young men of New England—Jason and Daniel Lee, and Cyrus Shepherd, volunteered for this work. They arrived at Fort Vancouver in September, 1834, and commenced their labors. But the principal result has been the laying a foundation for the white churches on the Upper Pacific Coast. The Indian tribes there are feeble and scattered, and melting away rapidly.

That fertile country lying south of Missouri, west of Arkansas, and north of Texas, is called the Indian Territory. To it the Government has removed tribe after tribe, as their title to lands in the East has been extinguished. Each tribe has its appointed metes and bounds; and to those mentioned already may be added the remnants of the Senecas, Modocs, Kickapoos, and Shawnees. Methodist missionaries like Cumming and Harrell followed them from the old home, where evangelization commenced, to the new home where in time an Annual Conference was organized. In 1882 there were four districts—Cherokee, Muskogee or Creek, Chickasaw, and Choctaw—and fifty appointments supplied by preachers, many of them Indians. There were 5,026 Indian members, and 112 local preachers. Exclusive of these, 1,100 white people and 30 negroes were numbered in the membership of the Indian Conference.\* Their numerous schools—male and female—are supported in part by the Government annuities and in part by the Missionary Society.

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\*The Minutes for 1882 contain obituaries of three traveling preachers: Isaac Saunders "was born in the old home of the Cherokees—east of the Mississippi." For thirty-two years he was an itinerant preacher among his people in the Indian Territory. "Twenty-nine years," says the official memoir, adopted by the Conference and printed in the General Minutes, "he was on the effective list. The Journal does not show a single complaint against him. His faith in Christ was unbroken to the last." Moses Mitchell was a full-blooded Seminole, in the seventh year of his ministry. "He was converted," says the memoir, "when young, and triumphed when passing through the sufferings of death." James McHenry, one of the patriarchs of the body, a Creek, was born on Flint River, and was sixty-five years old when he died. Like other eminent preachers, he presided over his native councils as well as circuits in the nation. These items are furnished by his comrade, Checote: "I first saw him in 1828-29, at the Methodist boarding-school near Fort Mitchell, in Alabama. He and I were ordained elders in the year 1859, at the Annual Conference held at the Old Creek Agency, over which Bishop Paine presided. He was four years president of the Senate, and was judge of Coweta District at his death. He died in the Lord."

As a general rule negro slaves received the gospel by Methodism, from the same preachers and in the same churches with their masters—the galleries, or a portion of the body of the house, being assigned to them. If a separate building was provided, the negro congregation was an appendage to the white, the pastor usually preaching once on Sunday for them, holding separate official meetings with their leaders, exhorters, and preachers, and administering discipline, and making return of members for the Annual Minutes. But the condition of the slave population segregated on the rice and sugar and cotton plantations appealed for help. The regular ministry did not reach the river deltas of the low country—a malarial region in which few white people are found. For twenty years before, missionaries to the slave population had been going through the regions most accessible; but in 1829 a system of plantation service and instruction was inaugurated by the South Carolina Conference.

On the east side of the modest marble obelisk placed over the grave of William Capers is this inscription: “The Founder of Missions to the Slaves.” In the autumn after his return from England, he was waited on by a wealthy planter on Santee, to learn if a Methodist exhorter could be recommended to him suitable for an overseer. He was aware of Dr. Capers’s interest in the religious welfare of the colored people, and that the prejudices and mistrusts which certain unfortunate ecclesiastical utterances had created against the Methodists could not attach to him who, besides other guarantees of character, was himself a slave-holder; and the happy results which had followed the pious endeavors of a Methodist overseer on the plantation of one of his Georgia friends had directed this planter’s attention to the subject. Dr. Capers doubted whether he could serve him in that particular way, but assured him that if he would allow him to make application to the Bishop and Missionary Board at the approaching session of the Conference, a minister, for whose character he could vouch fully, should be sent to his plantation as a missionary, whose time and efforts should be devoted exclusively to the religious instruction and spiritual welfare of his colored people. To this proposal cordial assent was given. Soon after two others, wealthy planters of Pon Pon and of Combahee, united in a similar request.

Dr. Capers, in addition to his duties as presiding elder of

Charleston District, accepted the difficult and delicate position of superintendent of the first negro missions established. With most judicious care were the two men chosen who were to enter this opening door and, by the results achieved, to keep it open. The following account of the enterprise is from one who was a member of the Conference and watched it through all its stages:

The first missionaries were the Rev. John Honour, and the Rev. John H. Massey. As if to try the faith of the Church, and test its power of self-sacrifice, John Honour, although a native of the low countries, took the bilious fever, through exposure in the swamps of his field of labor, and in September ended his mortal life and glorious work together, and entered into his rest. The operations of the first year gathered four hundred and seventeen Church-members. Foot-hold was gained. The experiment, eyed with distrust by most of the planters, denounced by many as a hurtful innovation upon the established order of things, favored by very few, was commenced. The noble-hearted gentlemen who went forward in the movement were in advance of their time, and could not but feel that they had assumed a heavy responsibility in indorsing for the beneficial results of such an undertaking. Of course they watched the developments of the affair with no small solicitude. As far as it went the first year it was perfectly satisfactory. The second year the membership on these missions more than doubled itself. Incredibly small, however, was the treasure-chest of the Missionary Society. The sum of two hundred and sixty-one dollars was reported to the Annual Conference as the aggregate of the collections for the year 1830. The following year another of the ministers of the Conference was added to the small but brave forlorn-hope. The oral instruction of the little negroes, by Catechism, was commenced; two hundred and fifty of these were placed under the care of the missionaries, and nine hundred and seventy-two Church-members were reported. At the ensuing session of the Conference, held at Darlington early in 1832, a decided and memorable impulse was given to the missionary spirit, particularly among the preachers, by a speech delivered at the anniversary of the Missionary Society, by the Rev. (now Bishop) James O. Andrew. After the usual preparatory exercises, he was introduced to the meeting, and read the following resolution: "That, while we consider false views of religion as being every way mischievous, and judge from the past that much evil has resulted from that cause among the slave population of this country, we are fully persuaded that it is not only safe, but highly expedient to society at large, to furnish the slaves as fully as possible with the means of true scriptural instruction and the worship of God." We have heard many good and clever speeches in our time, a few withal that deserved to be called great, but foremost in our recollection stands the remarkable speech made by Bishop Andrew on that occasion. He drew a picture of the irreligious, neglected plantation negro, Claude-like in the depth of its tone and color. He pointed out his degradation, rendered but the deeper and darker from the fitful and transient flashings up of desires which felt after God—scintillations of the immortal, blood-bought spirit within him, which ever and again gleamed amidst the darkness of his untutored mind. He pointed out the adaptation of the gospel to the extremest cases. Its recovering power and provisions were adequate to the



task of saving from sin and hell all men of all conditions of life, in all stages of civilization. He pointed to the converted negro, the noblest prize of the gospel, the most unanswerable proof of its efficiency. There he was, mingling his morning song with the matin chorus of the birds, sending up his orisons to God under the light of the evening-star, contented with his lot, cheerful in his labors, submissive for conscience' sake to plantation discipline, happy in life, hopeful in death, and from his lowly cabin carried at last by the angels to Abraham's bosom. Who could resist such an appeal, in which argument was fused in fervid eloquence? The speech carried by storm the whole assembly.

At the close of 1832 there were reported as members of the mission-family thirteen hundred and ninety-five souls, and four hundred and ninety children were regularly catechised. The experiment had been going on for four years. The theory of religious instruction for the blacks had been put to practical tests, had been watched in its matter-of-fact tendencies, had borne some fruit, and the earliest sheaves gave distinct promise of the coming harvest. An influential gentleman, who had witnessed on a large plantation of his own the successful results of religious instruction communicated through the means of the missionary organization, sent a complimentary letter to the Missionary Board, with a solicitation in behalf of a number of his friends in Beaufort that the missionaries should be sent to them. A respectable meeting of planters was held in Saint Luke's Parish on the subject of the religious instruction of the blacks, and the missionary system was advocated and adopted. The time for enlargement was come. It was found that the preaching of the gospel, with the characteristic simplicity and earnestness of the Methodist ministry, not only was understood by the negroes, and took well with them, but that, combined with the regular discipline of the Church, it produced a distinct and observable improvement in their moral character and habits, making them sober, honest, industrious, and contented. These were phases of character which overseers and proprietors, however unskilled in divinity and indifferent to points of theological subtlety and dispute, could judge of as well as a college of cardinals or a synod of Churchmen. And prejudice crumbled away piecemeal. Doubt and distrust brightened into approval. Confidence in the system took the place of opposition, and the friends of missions gave God praise and took courage as the door of access to these thousands of Africa's children was opened wider and wider.\*

The zeal of South Carolina provoked many, and the work so auspiciously begun was taken up by other Conferences and carried forward with success. In other States the planters became earnest friends of the missions to the slaves, and contributed largely to their support. At the before-mentioned anniversary of the Missionary Society, January, 1832, the board of managers, submitting their report, say:

The mission on the Santee numbers upward of three hundred members of the Church in regular and good standing. A considerable number of the slaves have been baptized during the past year. There is an evident improvement among the

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\* Rev. (afterward Bishop) W. M. Wightman, D.D., in *Southern Quarterly Review*.

negroes, both as regards the number who attend the means of grace and the solemn attention given to the word preached.

The negroes served on the Savannah River Mission [by the Rev. James Dannelly] being found convenient to meeting-houses, it has been judged expedient to throw that mission into the regular work of the circuit.

The mission on Combahee, Pon Pon, and Wappahoola, has had an increase the last year of two hundred and thirty members, making the aggregate number of members six hundred and seventy. Upward of one hundred little negroes receive catechetical instruction, one hundred and twenty-eight have been baptized, and the missionary expresses his conviction that the religious experience of the blacks is deeper, and their deportment more becoming, every year.

Guided by experience and cheered by success, we come to bind ourselves afresh to this holy work, and to renew the solemn obligations which the enterprise of negro instruction and salvation imposes on us. Into this long-neglected field of danger, reproach, and toil we again go forth, bearing the precious seed of salvation. And to the protection and blessing of the God of missions our cause is confidently and devoutly commended.

In 1833 two additional mission stations were established. In 1834 they numbered six, in 1835 eight, in 1836 nine, in 1837 ten.

In the tenth year of its operations the missionary ground of the Society embraced two hundred and thirty-four plantations, served by seventeen missionaries, under the general supervision of three superintendents. These missionaries preached at ninety-seven appointments, and had under their regular pastoral charge 5,556 Church-members, to whom they preached and administered the sacraments and discipline of the Church. And they had under catechetical instruction 2,525 negro children.\*

These results are separate from the negro membership distributed in smaller numbers through the upper country, and more accessible by the regular pastors. The Kentucky Conference, which reported in 1846 but one mission to the colored people, numbered among its regular communicants 9,479 of this class; and the Holston Conference made a report of no mission, but reckoned a colored membership of 4,133. The rule laid down by the South Carolina Board (auxiliary to the parent Society), and obtaining elsewhere, is expressed in one of their early reports:

That, as a general rule for our circuits and stations, we deem it best to include the colored people in the same pastoral charge with the whites, and to preach to both classes in one congregation, as our practice has been. The gospel is the same for all men, and to enjoy its privileges in common promotes good-will.

That at all preaching-places where galleries or other suitable sittings have not

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\*Shipp's History of Methodism in South Carolina (pages 450-465), in which reports are published in full. Each Annual Conference had an auxiliary Missionary Society.

been provided for the colored people, or where the galleries or other sittings are insufficient, we consider it the duty of our brethren and friends to provide the necessary accommodation, that none may make such a neglect a plea for absenting themselves from public worship.

Colored local preachers were used and were useful in promoting the religious welfare of their race. Rev. William Capers always had a corps of them about him in excellent training, wherever he was stationed. In Fayetteville, North Carolina, he found a remarkable one:

I have known, and loved, and honored not a few negroes in my life who were probably as pure of heart as Evans, or anybody else. Such were my old friends Castile Selby and John Boquet, of Charleston; Will Campbell and Harry Myrick, of Wilmington; York Cohen, of Savannah; and others I might name. These I might call remarkable for their goodness. But I use the word in a broader sense for Henry Evans, who was confessedly the best preacher of his time in that quarter, and who was so remarkable as to have become the greatest curiosity of the town, insomuch that distinguished visitors hardly felt that they might pass a Sunday in Fayetteville without hearing him preach. Evans was from Virginia—a shoe-maker.\*

By this agency much evangelizing was done in Charleston, and not only in the city where the black membership was to the white as five to one, but on the nearest plantations. Dr. Capers says: "We had belonging to the Church in Charleston (1811), as if raised up for the exigencies of the time, some extraordinary colored men. I have mentioned Castile Selby; there were also Amos Baxter, Tom Smith, Peter Simpson, Smart Simpson, Harry Bull, Richard Holloway, Aleck Harlston, and others, men of intelligence and piety, who read the Scriptures and understood them, and were zealous for religion among the negroes."†

In November, 1854, a few months before the death of the founder of missions to the slaves, the Conference Missionary Board made a report which speaks of the opening prospect, and alludes to what has been done:

Twenty-six years ago the South Carolina Conference began a system of regular ecclesiastical operations among the plantation negroes of the low country, by establishing two missions. At present there are twenty-six missionary stations, on which are employed thirty-two ministers, who are supported by the Society. The number of Church-members is 11,546, including 1,175 whites. The missionary revenue has risen from \$300 to \$25,000. These are the material results, so far as statistics are concerned. They call for devout acknowledgments to God, who has

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\* Autobiography of William Capers; and Biography by Dr. Wightman. † Ibid.



given us abundant favor in the sight of the community in carrying on a line of operations confessedly difficult and delicate.

The testimony of masters and missionaries goes to show that a wholesome effect has been produced upon the character of the negro population generally. A change for the better is visible everywhere, when the present generation is contrasted with the past; and in how many cases the gospel has proved the power of God to salvation, and presented before the throne the spirits of these children of Ham redeemed and washed by "the blood of sprinkling," and fitted for an abode in heaven, the revelations of the last day will disclose.

The singing was wonderful, and the catechetical instruction of youth and children, and of the congregations, was helped by Capers's Catechisms (No. 1 and No. 2), prepared expressly for this purpose, though they obtained a wider circulation. There was no romance here; it was in the highest degree a work of faith, demanding the patience of hope and the labor of love; and some of the best preachers of Southern Methodism spent their best days at it, as Charles Wilson, W. C. Kirkland, G. W. Moore, J. R. Coburn, R. J. Boyd, Bunch, Ledbetter, Turpin, and Rush.

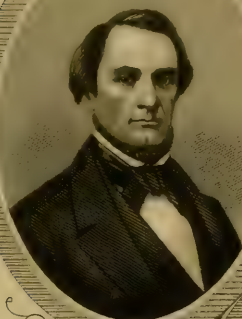
It grew. On the sugar and rice fields lying upon the Gulf of Mexico, and in the vast cotton plantations of the Mississippi Delta and its lower tributaries, this missionary system was the light and life of hundreds of thousands of "the servile progeny of Ham." Right-minded masters welcomed the missionaries, thankfully accepting such aid in discharging their own obligations to their dependents. Many built chapels, and not only countenanced them by their personal attendance during winter residence and transient visits, but contributed liberally to the funds of the Society; others tolerated preaching, at the expense of the Society; and yet others were obnoxious to the woe of them who neither enter the kingdom of heaven themselves nor suffer others to enter in. Agreeable surprises sometimes awaited a missionary on entering dark places of this sort which by debt, or death, or other influence, had been providentially opened—a society, rudely organized, was there before him, with its stated times of worship, its rules, and its members. By purchase or partition of estates, or by immigration, a religious negro or family of negroes was thrown, like leaven, into an ignorant mass of his fellow-beings, and became a source of instruction and a center of life which took form and grew, even under unpropitious surroundings. One missionary to such a sugar plantation in Louisiana found over thirty "members:" he had these to begin with.

Methodism has ventured every thing upon the evangelical maxim, "The Lord will take care of the Church that takes care of his poor." It suffered a drain on its resources when sending the gospel to the wandering Indian tribes and to the servile progeny of Ham; and in certain localities a social discount was endured. One of the best witnesses (Dr. Capers, so late as 1854) who bestowed much labor on a congregation where the black element preponderated and, in a certain sense, had to be carried by the white, has left this testimony:

Under all the obloquy cast upon them the Methodists were, nevertheless, much esteemed. Their preaching might be attended with great propriety, for almost everybody did so, but who might join them? No, it was vastly more respectable to join some other Church, and still attend the preaching of the Methodists, which was thought to answer all purposes. And this has been the case long since the year I am speaking of. The persons of that year whom I can call to mind have gone to their account; and yet I hesitate not to say that if all the individuals who have joined other Churches in that city since 1811, professing to have been awakened under the Methodist ministry, had joined the Church where God met them, the Methodist Church in Charleston might have ranked in worldly respects with the very first, before this day.

The rich claim whatever they want, even a fashionable church and a palatable gospel; they can pay for it! But "the Spirit of the Lord God" must be upon a man—he must be "anoointed—who preaches the gospel to the poor. In 1845 Southern Methodism had gathered into Church-membership one hundred and twenty-four thousand of the slave population; in the fifteen years following, that number had increased to two hundred and seven thousand, exclusive of catechumens.

Frequent references are made in the reports of laborers in this field to the "delicacy" as well the difficulty of their work. Their access to the slave population at one end of the Union was constantly liable to be restricted or cut off on account of intemperate speech or action at the other end, and that too by people professing to be friends of the slave, but far removed from the scene, and bearing no part in the perils, reproaches, and sacrifices of those who were seeking his spiritual welfare.



ROBERT ALEXANDER



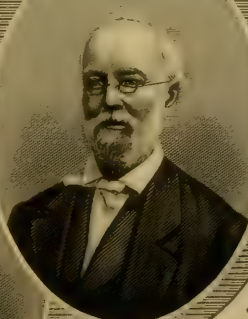
W. E. CUNNINGHAM



J. B. M. FERRIN



D. FITZGERALD



THOS. SUMMERS



REV. L. WHITE





## CHAPTER XL.

James O. Andrew—John Emory—Foreign Missions Inaugurated—Liberia—Brazil—Coxe—Pitts—Education—Colleges: Randolph Macon; La Grange; Dickinson; Wilbraham; Madison; Alleghany—J. P. Durbin—Thomas A. Morris—Death of McKendree: Taking Leave of his Brethren.

THE General Conference of 1832 met in the city of Philadelphia. One disturbing element having withdrawn from the Church, and the other being weak or quiet, the session was remarkably harmonious. James O. Andrew, of the Georgia, and John Emory, of the Baltimore Conference, were elected Bishops.\*

James Osgood Andrew was the son of John Andrew, the first native Georgian who had joined the traveling ministry. James was somewhat reluctantly licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference. Preachers were needed, and the Annual Conference, on the indorsement of his presiding elder, Lovick Pierce, who had brought up his recommendation from the Broad River Circuit, received him on trial (1812) and he was sent as second man on the Saltkahatchee Circuit, in Barnwell District, South Carolina. A friend mounted him on a pony, and he set out from his humble Georgia home for the east side of Savannah River. His opportunities for education had been limited to the "old-field school." He had never seen the world, or been a day's journey from home, but he had been converted, he had strong common sense, and he felt moved by the Holy Spirit to preach. The itinerancy, with the study and prayer and work that are in it, developed him. From circuit to circuit he went in Georgia and the two Carolinas, under judicious presiding elders, then to Charleston, Wilmington, Columbia, and Augusta. From the last station he went up to General Conference where, at thirty-eight years of age, he began to serve the Church on a wider scale. William McKendree was going out as James O. Andrew went into the office. After his election he asked the senior for the guiding rule which had made his own administration so successful. He gave him this: "James, do not seek responsibility, but never shun a responsibility that properly belongs to you; for in doing so you assume the gravest of all responsibilities."

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\* They were elected on the first ballot—the former by a vote of 140, the latter by 135, out of 223 votes cast.

Mary Cosby, his mother, was a woman of rare soul-refinement and power; and among the daughters of a Scotch merchant in Charleston he found a good wife—Amelia McFarland—who by her needle and school-keeping eked out the income of the parsonage, and encouraged her husband to continue in the ranks. He became a man of first-rate ability in the pulpit, wise in counsel, and a rich contributor to the periodical press. It was his invidious and peculiar lot to be the center of a historic strife, in the midst of which his self-poise never failed, and the gentleness and strength of his character were strikingly displayed.

Bishop Emory never met another General Conference. Early one December morning in 1835, he left his home, which was near the city, for Baltimore. A few hours after, having been thrown from his carriage, he was found dying on the road. A small man, never weighing over one hundred and twenty pounds, he was a giant in mental and moral stature, and though he died young, he lived long enough to impress himself on Methodism.

Like a ship keeping in sight of shore and cautiously coasting, the Missionary Society—guided by Dr. Bangs, who without charge acted as secretary—had confined its work to the Indian tribes and destitute settlements. The receipts of the first year were \$923.04, and in thirteen years they crawled up to \$17,097.05. The year following, under the *stimulus* of a new mission enterprise to the Oregon Indians, they suddenly rose to twice this figure. It was time to venture out, and the Society proposed, with the sanction of the General Conference, to plant its standard on the coast of Africa, and send agents to Mexico and South America to ascertain the feasibility of missions in those countries. ]

Mellville B. Coxe, a native of Maine, thirty-two years old, and stationed in Raleigh, North Carolina, was a reserve delegate to this General Conference. He volunteered to go as a missionary to Liberia, on the western coast of Africa, and was accepted. In mind and heart he seemed admirably adapted to this enterprise, while some thought his constitution too frail for it. Great admiration and much sympathy were excited in his behalf. To Bishop McKendree he said on receiving the appointment: "At present I am in peace. Death looks pleasant to me, life looks pleasant to me, labor and sufferings look pleasant to me, and last, though not least, Liberia looks pleasant to me. I see, or think I see, resting on Africa, the light and cloud of heaven."



March, 1833, he arrived in Liberia. He found many members, class-leaders, and preachers, whom the Colonization Society had carried out, and organized them into a branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He planned three missions, and an academy at Monrovia. But in less than five months from the time of his arrival he died, prescribing as his epitaph, "Let a thousand fall before Africa be given up." Twenty-five white missionaries died of the climate, or fled from it with ruined health, in seventeen years. Only four colored preachers died in the same time.

In 1835 Bishop Andrew appointed the Rev. Fountain E. Pitts, of the Tennessee Conference, on a missionary exploration to Brazil and South America. Sailing from Baltimore in June, he reached Rio Janeiro in August of that year. His reception, by foreigners and natives, was encouraging, and he commenced his ministerial labors in some half dozen private houses in that great city—the first Methodist preacher that ever preached the kingdom of God in that division of the New World. He formed a Methodist Society, and promised to send them a pastor as early as possible. Thence he sailed to Montevideo, at the mouth of the Rio de la Plata. Here he preached for some weeks and formed a Society. On board of a steamer he ascended the La Plata, to the city of Buenos Ayres, the special field of his destination. After an absence of twelve months he reached home. In consequence of his reports, efforts were made in Brazil. Rev. Justin Spaulding was sent to Rio Janeiro, but the effort was not successful; the land was not yet freed from Romish intolerance. Forty years afterward Methodism got a foothold in the capital and interior of that empire. The occupation of Buenos Ayres has been continued since 1836, when Dr. Dempster went out. For many years the work of the mission was confined chiefly to English-speaking persons, but the work gradually reached the Spanish population, and there is in later days a favorable report, especially in Montevideo, and in the interior of Uruguay.

During this *quadrennium* began a remarkable movement among the German population which has since assumed large proportions. We have seen Henry Boehm\* going the rounds

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\* Henry Boehm died in 1875, over a hundred years old. His father, Martin Boehm, and William Otterhein were the first bishops elected by "The Church of the United Brethren in Christ." The relations of this Church to Methodism have been, from the beginning, very fraternal.

with Bishop Asbury and preaching to a thrifty, intelligent, and increasing element of American citizens in their own language. At one place in the West he says:

On Thursday we fired three guns in quick succession. Bishop Asbury preached first, then Daniel Hitt, without any intermission, and as soon as he sat down I preached in German. There was a good number of Germans present (many of them Lutherans) who were permitted to sit near the stand and hear in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. They were delighted. They had supposed the difference in the effect of Methodist preaching from that of their own ministers was in the language. They thought the English expressed the gospel better. But when the power of God came upon the people, and tears flowed down many cheeks under German preaching, they were convinced the difference was not in the language, but in the manner of communication; the one formal, the other spiritual.

About 1835 appeared in Ohio a young German scholar, of thorough but rationalistic education, who had been reclaimed by Methodism to the faith of the Reformation—William Nast. He labored for some time among his countrymen in Cincinnati, under the direction and by the aid of the Missionary Society; and in the next annual report of the Society the “German Mission” and the name of its founder were first declared to the Church. German Methodism rapidly extended in the North-west, and to New Orleans and Texas in the South-west, and German Methodist churches, circuits, districts, were organized.

The connection between Methodism and the great Reformer’s countrymen is interesting. It was while John Wesley listened to the reading of Luther’s expository writings that he was converted. Before that he was awakened and put on the right path by Böhler, in London, and Spangenburg, in Savannah. Asbury insisted on having Otterbein join in his episcopal consecration. And among the Germans in Europe and America are found some of the best exemplars of primitive Wesleyanism.

The delegated body was becoming too large; the ratio of representation must be reduced, and the Annual Conferences had been requested by the General Conference of 1824 so to change the second Restrictive Rule as to allow a representation of not less than one for every twenty-one, instead of one for every seven. According to the constitution it required the consent of every Annual Conference to enact such a measure, and it was lost. A more general measure was brought forward subsequently. The conventional body of 1808 was so tenacious of the restrictions

placed upon the delegated body which was to succeed it, it enacted that they should be altered only by a majority of two-thirds of the General Conference, on the joint recommendation of *all* the Annual Conferences. This made a change very difficult; the smallest Conference, by one vote, could defeat the whole Connection in securing any object. After various efforts the Annual Conferences consented not only to alter the ratio of delegation, but gave their consent that all the restrictions, except the first, shall be subject to alteration upon the recommendation of two-thirds of the General Conference, when three-fourths of all the members of the several Annual Conferences who shall be present and vote concur therein. Thus has the constitution stood since 1832. The first restriction, which guards doctrines, remains as it was originally; so that change, under it, with the present number of Conferences, is barely not impossible.

About this time there was an enlargement of facilities for higher education under the influence and auspices of the Church. Randolph Macon College, at Boydton, Virginia—Dr. Olin, president; and La Grange College, La Grange, Alabama—Dr. Paine, president, were opened under the patronage of the Southern and South-western Conferences. The property of Dickinson College, at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, was proffered to the Baltimore and Philadelphia Conferences on certain conditions, which they accepted; and this institution, begun in 1783, passed under the patronage of Methodism. Dr. Durbin was president.

In 1830 Bishop McKendree made a donation of valuable lands to Lebanon Seminary, twenty-five miles east of St. Louis, an institution founded by the Illinois Conference, of which the Rev. E. R. Ames was principal. Its name was changed to McKendree College, and a charter obtained in 1834—the Rev. Peter Akers, D.D., being its first president.

In 1827 the Pittsburg Conference, desiring to establish a college, received the offer of an academy in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and it was opened under the title of "Madison College." Dr. Bascom was its first president, and Dr. Charles Elliott professor. In 1833 Alleghany College, which had been established at Meadville, was tendered to the Conference and accepted, and the institution at Uniontown was removed to that place.

In 1830 a building in Middletown, Connecticut, owned by a literary institution, was offered to the New England Conference



on condition of its raising \$40,000 for endowment. The offer was accepted, and Dr. Wilbur Fisk, who had charge of Wilbraham Academy, was elected president, and removed to Middletown. Thus the "Wesleyan University" began, under the patronage of the New York and New England Conferences.

This was an educational outfit that began to be felt at once for good upon the Church and country. The direct influence in fostering Christian education was hardly greater than the indirect influence in reforming or holding in check the State colleges and universities, some of which had become godless and corrupting to an alarming extent. The lack of endowment was a sore evil, and these institutions struggled under embarrassments which all did not survive. Tuition fees were unequal to their demands and unsteady, and the Church was slow to realize the conditions of permanent success; but while trustees were perplexed, and agents were exercised, and professors were stinted, educated men were sent forth to teach and to preach, to mold public opinion and promote public improvements; and the return influence was in time to help the most persistent survivors, or to establish others on a better foundation.

At the session of 1832 a large number of petitions were presented asking an amendment of the Discipline on the subject of temperance so as to make the law more stringent, but no decided action was taken in this direction.

The population moving westward, there was a demand for a western periodical, and the General Conference authorized the establishment of the *Western Christian Advocate*, of which Thomas A. Morris was elected editor. John P. Durbin was elected editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*.

In the last year of his effective ministry (about 1818) that man of blessed memory in the West—Benjamin Lakin—received into the Church a couple of lads in Bourbon county, Kentucky, who were destined to long and eminent usefulness. One was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker in the village of Paris, and the other to a printer. John P. Durbin made "cases" from which Hubbard H. Kavanaugh set type; and pieces of furniture—his handiwork—are yet preserved among friends of the family. Both went into the ministry before they were twenty years old. Durbin fell into the Ohio Conference, and his first circuit there took him alone into the north-west corner of the State, "where

the Indians still roved, to look after some one hundred members of the Church who were scattered through the wilderness over a circuit of two hundred miles." In the narrow cabins of the new settlers he made himself acquainted with Wesley's and Fletcher's works; or, when weather permitted, after preaching and the class-meeting were over, he betook himself to the groves for study. Next year his circuit was in Indiana, and there, at the instance and by the help of his colleague, J. Collard, he was inducted into English grammar; after which Dr. Ruter advised him to try Latin and Greek, furnishing him the primers. All this time the young preacher was making his mark in preaching, his cares and studies being drawn that way. There was something in him that held his audience by a strange spell. Stationed the next year in Hamilton, Ohio, about twelve miles from Miami University, he attended the university through the week, pursuing his studies, and returned on Friday to prepare for the pulpit. At first this caused some dissatisfaction among the people; but when they saw his thirst for knowledge, and his fidelity and efficiency during three days of the week, and reflected, perhaps, that while they were losing a small per cent. of his services for one year, he was laying the foundation to increase the value of his services to the whole Church fifty per cent. for the remaining years of his life, they had the good sense to approve his course. The next year he was stationed in Lebanon, and still pushed his studies. His next appointment was in Cincinnati, where he was admitted to the Cincinnati College. Here he finished his collegiate course and was admitted to the degree of A.M. After taking his degree he was appointed Professor of Languages in Augusta College. Traveling eastward to collect funds for the college, he first became known in the pulpits there. A genuine light from the West rose upon them, and the East retained him. In 1831, in his absence, the Senate of the United States elected him chaplain. His sermons in the capitol were memorable. In 1832 he was elected Professor of Natural Sciences in the Wesleyan University, Connecticut, but resigned upon being elected editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. This position he vacated in 1834 to take the presidency of Dickinson College, where he gathered around him a faculty of rare power and learning. By travel abroad he was still more enlarged. Unpromising in appearance — unless looked at closely; addicted

to drawling exordiums and overwhelming perorations; such, in part, was John P. Durbin. Those who could not define his power felt and acknowledged it willingly. Great in executive ability as well as in speech, he would surely have been at the head of the cabinet-making business had not the Lord called him to something else. He did not display his full capacity for affairs, however, until as Missionary Secretary he came to the directory of a world-wide enterprise for the salvation of souls.

Thomas A. Morris, who was put at the helm of the Western paper at the same time Durbin took a similar position in the East, was born in Kanawha county, Virginia, in 1796. He says:

July, 1813, while I listened to David Young preaching at a camp-meeting, on the parable of the sower, I was brought to form a solemn purpose to seek earnestly for salvation till I should obtain it. In August I joined a small country class on trial. I had prayed in secret for months, but made little progress till I took this decisive step, and thus drew a separating line from my irreligious associates. The conflict with sin thus renewed continued till some time in November, when I obtained some relief and comfort, and on Christmas-day I received a clear sense of pardon and a full "spirit of adoption." In the meantime I missed none of David Young's quarterly-meetings. At one of them he baptized me in the presence of a multitude, and the same day on which he poured the water on my head the Lord poured plentifully his Spirit into my heart.

Reared in a rural district of a new country, amid agricultural pursuits, I was inured to toils and perils, which have been of service to me in every relation of subsequent life. "By grace I am what I am." An experience of over fifty years confirms my conviction that in Christ alone are pardon, peace, and heaven.

In 1816 he began to preach through Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and Ohio, and was quietly, steadily useful. The firmness of conscious rectitude and the meekness of wisdom were blended in him, and in all the relations which he bore to the Church a healthful influence went out from him. He was given to clear, short sermons abruptly concluded.

Bishop McKendree's last Conference (Lebanon, Tennessee) closed Nov. 14, 1834,\* and he preached his last sermon in McKendree Church, Nashville, on Sunday, Nov. 23. In the course of the next month he reached his brother's residence in Sumner county, under a presentiment that his end was near, and in accordance with a long-cherished wish to die at home and be

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\* In the same county (Wilson, Tennessee), and near the same place (Liberty Hill) where he held his first Conference (in 1808), he held his last; and within a few miles, in the same county, is Bethlehem, where, in 1815, Bishop Asbury held his last Conference.



buried there. His father and brother had removed from Virginia several years before, and resided at Fountain Head, about a day's journey north of Nashville. Bodily infirmities, which had been held at bay by the resistance of a strong will, now rushed upon him, bowed under the weight of seventy-eight years. A favorite sister who, like himself, lived and died unmarried and seemed to live for God and her brother, waited upon him, and watched by his bedside unceasingly. Once awakening from slumber in the night he looked at her and his nieces, sitting by his bed, and said, with a smile: "You are like a lamp—burning while I sleep, to cheer me when I wake."

On Sunday before his death his brother, the doctor, said to him: "Bishop, you are sinking fast; we shall, in all probability, soon be separated." He replied: "Yes, I know it; but all is well." He made a signal that he wished to speak. To his nephew, leaning over to receive his communication, he said: "All is well for time or for eternity. I live by faith in the Son of God." In his most emphatic manner he repeated: "I wish that matter to be perfectly understood—that all is well with me, whether I live or die. For two months I have not had a cloud to darken my sky. I have had uninterrupted confidence in my Saviour's love." He was fond of the phrase, "All is well." To inquiries as to the state of his soul, this was his usual reply. It was, indeed, his last connected expression, although the last word was "Yes," in answer to the question asked him while dying, "Is all well *now*?" He died March 5th, and was buried in the family grave-yard, by the side of his father.\*

The reader has taken knowledge of the first native American bishop as providentially suited to the constitutional era of the Church. Though keenly alive to the personal alienations and the conflicts which befell him, he lived to see both its doctrines and polity under the protection of fundamental law. The ready-coined reproach—love of power—moved him not while he met the responsibility of his time and station. He appreciated the

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\* Forty years afterward, when the changes of time and the desolations of war had turned the old homestead into a ruin, and the large stone, with its full but rudely cut epitaph was thrown down, and the grave was in a way soon to be lost sight of, the remains of Bishop McKendree were disinterred, and placed, with Bishop Soule's, in the *campus* of Vanderbilt University. A granite monument marks the spot where the two rest together—Cavalier and Puritan.

relation of good government to a pure religion; and in government, he understood the relation of its parts. He saw the missionary epoch inaugurated, at home and abroad. The educational advance came in his day. "The last letter," says his biographer, then at the head of one of the rising institutions of the South, "the last letter I ever received from him, and not long previous to his death, contained fifty dollars for La Grange College. The handwriting detected the giver. No appeal had been made to him, yet out of his annual pittance he was prompted by his interest in the cause of education to make the donation, and tried to conceal the donor. His special object was that the money should be applied to place in the college library the standard religious literature of the Church, for the instruction and benefit of the students."

It is not beneath the dignity of the subject, in illustrating character, to add that, like other itinerants, he had a kind feeling for his horse. Asbury admired his sure-footed Fox as he nobly breasted a mountain torrent. Soule took Hero from the turf, believing that blood would tell; and how many continental rounds he made on him it might sound marvelous to say. And McKendree did not forget "Old Gray," a horse as well known to thousands as his master. They had become superannuated together, and he bequeathed money sufficient out of his savings to furnish the venerable roadster, nearing thirty years, with plenty of food, a good stable, and a bluegrass pasture for life.

Members are gathering at Cincinnati for the General Conference, and many will remember the manner of Bishop McKendree's leave-taking in 1832, described by one who saw it:

His last visit to the Conference was made the day before the adjournment. Having remained as long as his strength would allow, he arose to retire. He was but too conscious of his approaching dissolution to expect ever to meet his brethren again in another General Conference. Leaning on his staff, his once tall and manly form now bent with age and infirmity, his eyes suffused with tears, his voice faltering with emotion, he exclaimed, "Let all things be done without strife or vainglory, and try to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace! My brethren and children, love one another." Then spreading forth his trembling hands and raising his eyes to heaven, he pronounced, in faltering and affectionate accents, the apostolic benediction. Slowly and sadly he left the house to return no more. The whole assembly rose and stood till he disappeared.

## CHAPTER XLI.

The Struggle and Defeat of Abolitionism in the Church—Presiding Elders in the Conflict—General Conference Refuses to Change the Discipline—Restates the Position—Despairing to Accomplish their Purpose, Abolitionists Secede—The Wesleyan Methodist Church Organized—Peace and Prosperity.

THE meeting of the General Conference (May, 1836) in Cincinnati presented a reduced delegation but a very able body. The death of two and the infirm health of three bishops made the strengthening of the episcopacy necessary, and near the close of the session Beverly Waugh, then Book Agent at New York, a native of Fairfax county, Virginia, and Wilbur Fisk, were elected. After several ballotings, Thomas A. Morris was also chosen. Dr. Fisk was then absent in Europe, and on his return declined accepting the office, believing it to be his duty to remain President of the Wesleyan University.\*

The Missionary Society now took its position as one of the great departments of the Church, and Dr. Nathan Bangs was elected Secretary, with a salary and no other work to do.

A familiar ghost reappeared. The report adopted shows how it fared—presented May 22 by the chairman, John Davis, a leading member of the Baltimore Conference:

The committee to whom were referred sundry memorials from the North, praying that certain rules on the subject of slavery, which formerly existed in our book of Discipline, should be restored, and that the General Conference take such measures as they may deem proper to free the Church from the evil of slavery, beg leave to report that they have had the subject under serious consideration, and are of opinion that the prayers of the memorialists cannot be granted, believing that it would be highly improper for the General Conference to take any action that would alter or change our rules on the subject of slavery. Your committee therefore respectfully submit the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That it is inexpedient to make any change in our book of Discipline respecting slavery, and that we deem it improper further to agitate the subject in the General Conference at present.

During the session of the Conference an anti-slavery meeting was held in the city, and two members attended and took part in

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\* On the first ballot 153 voters were present. Beverly Waugh obtained 85 and Wilbur Fisk 78 votes. After balloting the sixth time, Thomas A. Morris obtained 86 votes. (General Conference Journal.)



the discussion. Whereupon their conduct was taken notice of in the following manner:

Whereas great excitement has prevailed in this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, which is reported to have been increased in this city recently by the unjustifiable conduct of two members of the General Conference, in lecturing upon and in favor of that agitating topic; and whereas such a course on the part of any of its members is calculated to bring upon this body the suspicions and distrust of the community, and misrepresent its sentiments in regard to the point at issue; and whereas in this aspect of the case, a due regard for its own character, as well as a just concern for the interests of the Church confided to its care, demand a full, decided, and unequivocal expression of the views of the General Conference in the premises: therefore,

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That they disapprove, in the most unqualified sense, the conduct of two members of the General Conference who are reported to have lectured in this city recently upon and in favor of modern abolitionism.

*Resolved*, That they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave as it exists in the slave-holding States of this Union.

The first resolution was adopted, one hundred and twenty-two voting in favor, and eleven against it.

The second resolution was then read. An amendment was moved by Orange Scott, of New England, and after considerable debate the motion to amend was lost, one hundred and twenty-three against, and fourteen in favor of it. The resolution was again read, and a division of it called for. The first member of the resolution was adopted, one hundred and twenty in favor, and fourteen against it. On taking the question on the remaining part of the resolution, one hundred and thirty-seven voted in favor of it, and none in the opposition. The preamble was then read and adopted.

David Young, of Ohio, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, to which was referred the complaints of certain local preachers in Lancaster county, Virginia—belonging to the Baltimore Conference—made a report. The complainants first invite the attention of the General Conference to the section of the Discipline which states that “no slave-holder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, when the laws of the State in which he lives will admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.” They then produce an extract of the laws from the commonwealth of Virginia, showing their extreme rigor in this matter, and they allege that the

Conference has unjustly refused them ordination, because of slave-holding, as they deem their case to be precisely one of the exceptions to the general statute provided for in the Discipline.

The committee refrain from judging the Baltimore Conference, not knowing all the grounds of action in dealing with the cases of certain slave-holding local preachers, and conclude thus: "Having said this much respecting the alleged grounds of grievance, your committee agree in the opinion that the exceptions to the general rule in the Discipline, referred to by the petitioners, clearly apply to official members of the Church in Virginia, according to the laws of the commonwealth, and do therefore protect them against a forfeiture of their official standing on account of said rule." The report was adopted.

If any thing else were necessary to define the position of Methodism, it was furnished in the Pastoral Address. On motion of S. G. Rozell, of the Baltimore Conference, the committee appointed to draft it were formally instructed "to take notice of the subject of modern abolition, that has so seriously agitated the different parts of our country, and that they let our preachers, members, and friends know that the General Conference is opposed to the agitation of that subject, and will use all prudent means to put it down." And these instructions were followed.

This session was noteworthy for the amount of well-digested legislation on the Book Concern, the revised constitution of the Missionary Society, the order of Church courts in the trial of preachers and members, and the location of inefficient and unacceptable traveling preachers, and for a general improvement in ecclesiastical jurisprudence.

In addition to the *Christian Advocate and Journal* and the *Western Christian Advocate*, similar papers were established in Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, to be conducted under the direction and patronage of the Connection. *The Christian Apologist*, for the Germans, was also authorized to be published in Cincinnati by the Western Book Concern.

A new and stringent act on Temperance being under discussion, "on motion of William Winans it was resolved that the resolution under consideration be referred to the Bishops, with the request that they give their opinion whether it interferes with the fourth restrictive regulation in our Discipline." The resolution went to the Annual Conferences, which failed to concur.

While peace and prosperity were the rule for the next eight years, New England was an exception. The two delegates of the New Hampshire Conference—Norris and Storrs—who had been censured at Cincinnati, were lionized at home. A systematic agitation was begun, and extraordinary preambles and resolutions were thrust upon Annual and Quarterly Conferences. Some of these resolutions censured the acts and attitude of other Annual Conferences, especially in the South; unchristianized a large proportion of American Methodists; reflected seriously upon the administration; and pronounced harsh judgment upon ministers and members in good standing in the Church who had not been arraigned. The Bishops, believing that one Annual Conference had no right to censure the proceedings of another, and that such business was no part of the disciplinary schedule which they, as executive and judicial officers of the Church, were required to carry out, ruled against these resolutions, and declined to put them to vote; and they instructed the presiding elders to hold their judicatories to legal and legitimate business. One, who allowed the quarterly-meetings of his district to be turned virtually into abolition meetings, was removed; another, who became very unpopular for keeping abolition business off the record and out of the official meetings, was returned to his district in the face of opposition. Of course, vigorous and pushing men like Messrs. Scott, Storrs, Horton, Sunderland, Merrill, and their company, were not to be checked up by "rulings." Their consciences were in it, and they must testify, not only as men, but "in a Conference capacity." The tyranny of bishops was denounced, and the elective presiding eldership was in favor. The older Bishops—Hedding and Soule—encountered rough seas, but weathered the storm with only slight damage; but when it was the turn of Bishops Waugh and Morris to preside in New England, they properly dreaded it. The latter wrote requesting Bishop Soule to meet him in New Hampshire, and help him out. Bishop Waugh held the Conference at Nantucket, June, 1837.\* A caucus or convention representing sixty preachers met in advance or outside of the session, to arrange a programme, and a committee was appointed to wait on him and inquire whether he will rule against the introduction of abolition peti-

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\*Anti-slavery Struggle and Triumph in the Methodist Episcopal Church, by L. C. Matlack, D.D., 1881; with an Introduction by D. D. Wheldon, D.D.



tions, appointing a committee on them, and discussing and disposing of any report from such a committee in a Conference capacity, and they conclude: "We think we have good reason to believe that if the privilege of introducing these petitions and memorials of our people is denied, the Conference will refuse to act on any subject that shall be introduced."\* The Bishop asked time to consider of it; and next day he replied in a long letter. We give an extract:

I respectfully and affectionately say to you that as far as may be consistent with my obligations to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it will afford me pleasure to abstain from any course in which conflict or disagreement will be likely to arise on any subject which may come before the Conference. I cannot, however, admit the doctrine which you have set up in your communication, when you say that it is your right to appoint a committee to report on said memorial, and also to act on any report from such committee. I cannot admit this unqualified and unlimited doctrine of right, because I know of no instrument or organization, or established usage, which gives such a right to an Annual Conference. Annual Conferences owe their existence to the General Conference, and cannot have organization without the action of that body in fixing the boundaries thereof. The General Conference determines not only the location and bounds of an Annual Conference, but defines the business to which its action extends. It will not be pretended by any one that an Annual Conference is a legislative body. Its functions are judicial and executive. Whence then the right claimed, to receive memorials on the subject of slavery, to refer them to a committee, and to act on any report which may be made by such committee? It is, indeed, admitted that those Conferences within whose bounds slavery exists can and ought to take such cognizance of the subject as they are empowered and directed to do by the General Conference, and to perform executive acts in fulfillment of the regulations of the General Conference; but what executive act can be performed by an Annual Conference on the subject of slavery, in whose bounds it has no existence? But the doctrine set up cannot be admitted because of its destructive tendency. If an Annual Conference can extend its jurisdiction over questions other than those which are judicial and executive, then it may introduce and prosecute measures which may arraign, censure, or condemn the very body which gives it existence. It may appoint a committee to investigate and report on any of our doctrines,

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\* It was "voted" to appoint a committee "to fix on some proper plan of operations," in case the Bishop's rulings were not favorable; and this is the report which the Rev. La Roy Sunderland, chairman of the committee of five, presented: "The committee to whom was referred the question as to the best measures for the Conference to take, in case the Bishop denies us the right of acting in a Conference capacity on the memorials to be presented on the subject of slavery to-morrow morning, report that in their opinion the best measure in the case above supposed will be to lay every other question upon the table till this right is granted us; as this question, under present circumstances, the committee believe to be paramount in its claims to any other which can at this time come before the Conference. And should this plan fail we recommend that the Conference should adjourn to the commencement of another session, from time to time, till our rights are granted us; and that the intervals be spent in solemn prayer" (*Methodism and Slavery*, by L. C. Matlack, 1849.)

either favorably or unfavorably. It may take under its revision the very Discipline itself, and by report sanction or condemn it.

The correspondence, and questions for the Chair on the Conference floor, ran along through the session; the Bishop was badly badgered, and afterward roundly berated.

Bishop Hedding argued the case often and at length with his old friends of New England. A short extract from one of his addresses will serve to indicate the drift:

It has been said, "It is the prerogative of the (Annual) Conference to decide *what* business they will do, and *when* they will do it." But I deny it—this is assuming the rights of the General Conference, and usurping a control over the president of an Annual Conference which no body of men has a right to exercise but the General Conference. And because I was unwilling to submit to this usurpation I have been severely censured. I have been unjustly, repeatedly, and cruelly held up to public view, by certain inconsiderate writers, as one who infringed on the "rights" of my brethren.

Of course these reformers had an organ—*Zion's Watchman*. In its columns vituperation ran riot. They denounced officials as pro-slavery, the tools of the slave power, tyrants; they assailed the whole Church as "rotten," "stained with the blood of bondsmen." Dr. Fisk saw the plague spreading, and wrote able letters sustaining the administration, and declaring to his New England friends "that the doctrines and measures of modern abolitionism are revolutionary in their character and tendency, and must, if persisted in, end in schism and in the dismemberment of the Church of Christ." Dr. Bangs and Bishops Hedding and Soule, out of abundant material, repeatedly brought charges against some of the leaders for "slander," "falsehood," "misrepresentation," "treating me in a scurrilous manner," "publishing against me an injurious falsehood." It availed nothing. Charges might be supported by specifications and specifications by proof, but getting a verdict was another thing. The result was—acquitted, triumphantly acquitted! "Modern abolition" had this quality—it was blind, as well as bitter.

Sunderland, who conveniently held a superannuated relation, moved to New York City to publish his paper, and fell into a trap which his partisans averred had been set to catch him. A late law provided that a superannuated preacher might be arrested for "immoral and unchristian conduct" wherever residing, even though outside of his Conference limit. Sunderland was arrested and tried before D. Ostrander, presiding elder of

New York District, and found guilty on eleven specifications, including such terms as "misrepresentation," "vituperation," "deception," "defamation," "slander"—a committee of five leading ministers saying over their signatures that "the charge is clearly and fully sustained by the testimony." He was suspended until the New England Conference met, which promptly set aside the whole affair. The New York Conference (in 1839) sent up a grave charge against him, with a committee to prosecute it. After hearing the case, the verdict was: "And he hereby is acquitted, on the charge preferred against him by the New York Annual Conference."\*

The presiding elders had a hard time; for where a bishop had one conflict in a year they might have twenty. Some Quarterly Conferences were closed up after the presiding elder, worn out and worried by adjournment and other tactics, had left the chair, and matters were entertained and entered upon the official journal which he had ruled out.

The whole matter came before the General Conference of 1840, both in passing upon the administration of the four preceding years, and in the Address of the Bishops. The Address brought the subject up directly. After speaking of the satisfactory state of the Connection, and the good effects and general observance of the Pastoral Address sent forth in 1836, which advised abstinence "from all abolition movements and from agitating the exciting subject in the Church," it adds: "But we regret that we are compelled to say that in some of the Northern and Eastern Conferences, in contravention of your Christian and pastoral counsel and our best efforts to carry it into effect, the subject has been agitated in such forms and in such a spirit as to disturb the peace of the Church. This unhappy agitation has not been confined to the Annual Conferences, but has been introduced into Quarterly Conferences and made the absorbing business of self-created bodies in the bosom of our beloved Zion." After stating the controversy that had arisen as to "the constitutional powers of the General Superintendents in their relations to the Annual Conferences," and as to "the rights of Annual and Quarterly Conferences in their official capacities," and showing that "the geographical bounds of the controversy are very limited," the Address proceeds to state the points at issue:

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\* *Methodism and Slavery*, by L. C. Matlack, pages 248-251.



The whole subject may be presented to you in the following simple questions: When any business comes up for action in our Annual or Quarterly Conferences, involving a difficulty on a question of law, so as to produce the inquiry, What is the law in the case? does the constitutional power to decide the question belong to the president or the Conference? Have the Annual Conferences a constitutional right to do any other business than what is specifically prescribed, or by fair construction, provided for in the form of Discipline? Has the president of an Annual Conference, by virtue of his office, a right to decline putting a motion or resolution to vote, on business other than that thus prescribed or provided for? These questions are proposed with exclusive reference to the principle of constitutional right. The principles of courtesy and expediency are very different things.

As far as we have been able to ascertain the views of those who entertain opinions opposite to our own on these points, they may be summed up as follows: They maintain that all questions of law arising out of the business of our Annual or Quarterly Conferences are to be, of right, settled by the decision of those bodies, either primarily by resolution or finally by an appeal from the decision of the president; "that it is the prerogative of an Annual Conference to decide what business they will do and when they will do it;" that they have a constitutional right "to discuss, in their official capacity, all moral subjects;" to investigate the official acts of other Annual Conferences, of the General Conference, and of the General Superintendents, so far as to pass resolutions of disapprobation or approval on those acts. They maintain that the president of an Annual Conference is to be regarded in the same relation to the Conferences that a chairman or speaker sustains to a civil legislative assembly; that it is his duty to preserve order in the Conference, to determine questions of order subject to appeal, and put to vote all motions and resolutions, when called for, according to the rules of the body; that these are the settled landmarks of his official prerogatives as president of the Conference, beyond which he has no right to go; that although it belongs to his office, as general superintendent, to appoint the time for holding the several Annual Conferences, he has no discretionary authority to adjourn them, whatever length of time they may have continued their session, or whatever business they may think proper to transact. From these doctrines we have felt it our solemn duty to dissent; and we will not withhold from you our deliberate and abiding conviction that should they be sustained by the General Conference the uniform and efficient administration of the government would be rendered impracticable.

The response of the General Conference came in the form of the following enactment, proposed by a committee of which Dr. Winans was chairman:

The president of an Annual or a Quarterly-meeting Conference has the right to decline putting the question on a motion, resolution, or report, when in his judgment such motion, resolution, or report does not relate to the proper business of the Conference; provided that in all such cases the president, on being required by the Conference to do so, shall have inserted in the journals of the Conference his refusal to put the question on such motion, resolution, or report, with his reason for so refusing.

That the president of an Annual or a Quarterly-meeting Conference has the

right to adjourn the Conference over which he presides when, in his judgment, all the business prescribed by the Discipline to such Conference shall have been transacted; provided that if an exception be taken by the Conference to his so adjourning it, the exception shall be entered upon the journal of such Conference.

The *proviso* secures the ground—if there be ground—for a charge of maladministration or malfeasance against the presiding officer to the proper tribunal.

A memorial from the official members of Westmoreland, Virginia, repeated the complaint which four years before had been sent up by their neighbors of Lancaster, that, while geographically they were subject to State laws under which emancipation, in the sense of the Discipline, could not take place, the Baltimore Conference, to which ecclesiastically they belonged, discriminated against them, refusing to elect local preachers to orders, or to admit them into the traveling connection, because they were slave-holders. Whereupon the following action was taken:

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That under the provisional exception of the general rule of the Church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in States or Territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and cannot therefore be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination.

The English Wesleyans had, as usual, proffered advice on the vexed question, to which the American Methodists say in a reply adopted by the General Conference and signed by all the Bishops: "We assure you then, brethren, that we have adopted no new principle or rule of discipline respecting slavery since the time of our apostolic Asbury; neither do we mean to adopt any. We should regard it a sore evil to divert Methodism from her proper work of 'spreading Scripture holiness over these lands,' to questions of temporal import, involving the rights of Cæsar."

The foreign brethren are reminded of the peculiar structure of the United States Government:

That while some States favor emancipation, there are others in which slavery exists so universally and is so closely interwoven with their civil institutions that both do the laws disallow of emancipation and the great body of the people (the source of laws with us) hold it to be treasonable to set forth any thing, by word or deed, tending that way. Each one of all these States is independent of the rest and sovereign, with respect to its internal government (as much so as

if there existed no confederation among them for ends of common interest), and therefore it is impossible to frame a rule on slavery proper for our people in all the States alike. . . . Under the administration of the venerated Dr. Coke, this plain distinction was once overlooked, and it was attempted to urge emancipation in all the States; but the attempt proved almost ruinous, and was soon abandoned by the Doctor himself. While, therefore, the Church has encouraged emancipation in those States where the laws permit it, and allowed the freed man to enjoy freedom, we have refrained for conscience' sake from all intermeddling with the subject in those other States where the laws make it criminal. And such a course we think agreeable to the Scriptures and indicated by St. Paul's inspired instruction to servants in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter vii., verses 20-24.

This part of the Address concludes by quoting with approval the words of Richard Watson, speaking, in 1833, to their own preachers in the West Indies: "Your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition."

The North and East furnished able combatants on both sides of the home controversy. The propositions affirmed by the abolitionists and denied by the conservatives may be stated thus: All slave-holding is sinful. No slave-holder should be retained in the communion of the Christian Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church is largely responsible for the continuance of slavery in the United States. The Discipline should be changed so as to exclude all slave-holders. Immediate and unconditional emancipation is the duty and the right of all.

The conservatives set forth that the Old Testament recognized the patriarchs as owning servants or slaves, who became such by purchase or by being born in their house; that laws regulating slavery were divinely authorized; and that the New Testament nowhere forbade the owning of slaves, but recognized both Christian masters and their Christian slaves as united in fellowship in the apostolic Churches; and as to violent "extirpation," even admitting the worst, they reminded their opponents of the parable of the wheat and tares.

The abolitionists, replying, quoted the original Methodist testimonies against all slave-holding; their subsequent modifications, and the repeal of anti-slavery statutes; the abandonment of early systematic plans of agitation; and the toleration of the practice as evidence of responsibility for slavery.

A resolution asking for a constitutional change of Discipline,



making non-slave-holding a condition of membership, had passed the New England Conference, and been sent to the other Annual Conferences for concurrence, but it met with little favor.\*

In the New York, Erie, and Pittsburg Conferences measures were adopted and discipline enforced against ministers of these bodies for their attendance upon anti-slavery conventions and advocacy of abolition views "under the pretense of preaching sermons." A standing question in the Philadelphia Conference in 1837 and for years was, Are you an abolitionist?—an affirmative answer insuring the rejection of a candidate for admission. The discouragement of the reformers after the General Conference of 1840 was general and deep. "There is no reforming the Church," said some who had been sanguine. "Abolitionism is dead," sighed others. A few held on, moaning, "There is no hope." An author remarks: "Nevertheless, the Methodist anti-slavery societies were not given up, though they had a sickly existence. The brethren in New England could not, with any face, give up the form, although the thing itself was languishing."†

"During the autumn of 1840 an effort was made to rally the abolitionists of the Church generally by holding a convention in New York City, which brought together a large number of them." An American Wesleyan Anti-slavery Society was organized, but died at its first anniversary.‡ It was clear the Church meant to maintain the "Discipline as it is." Having lost all hope, the abolitionists prepared to secede.

In 1842 the Wesleyan Methodist Church was organized, under the leadership of Messrs. Scott, Horton, Sunderland, Luther Lee, Brewster, Ogden, Matlack, Prindle, and others—men of force and of earnest convictions. The new organization accepted the doctrines of the parent Church, but made non-slave-holding

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\* In the Genesee Conference, thirty voted for it and sixty against it. The Pittsburg Conference gave five votes for it. All the other Conferences outside of New England gave less votes than these two, and in most cases none at all. The Michigan Conference gave one vote for it, and the Erie Conference three. The North Carolina, Philadelphia, Missouri, Indiana, New Jersey, Troy, Black River, Illinois, Kentucky, Georgia, Baltimore, Virginia, and others, were unanimous for non-concurrence, or reported no votes in favor of it. (Matlack's *Anti-slavery Struggle and Triumph*.)

† Elliott's *Great Secession*, as quoted by Matlack.

‡ Porter's *History of Methodism*, Chapter XI. Matlack's *Anti-slavery Struggle and Triumph*.

a condition of membership. They established a paper called the *True Wesleyan* and a Book Concern in Syracuse, New York. Within two or three years about twenty thousand members withdrew, and joined them. Central New York and New England were the principal seat of the secession. Strong and persistent efforts were made to draw away disciples after them, and both among ministers and members the indications of loss were formidable; but, as in 1828, when the other chronic element of trouble drew off, so now, many who had talked came to a pause at the actual crisis. Men like Timothy Merritt could not lightly leave the Church that made them, and which, in turn, they had helped to make. A reaction set in. Many ultraists became moderate for awhile, trying to save their Church from the ruin of ultraism. The local irritation was active, but the general relief was great. Conservatism had triumphed everywhere except in one corner of the land, and there the "geographical bounds of the controversy were very limited."

Now came a period of peace and prosperity unprecedented. Revivals prevailed, churches were built, colleges and schools were full of students pursuing a higher curriculum; the mission-work among the slaves, ever sensitive to such excitement, had fallen off—but now it revived and prospered greatly. The increase of the Church far exceeded any thing known in its previous history, being in 1841, 57,473; in 1842, 60,883; in 1843, 154,624; and in 1844, 102,831—making a total increase in the four years of more than 375,000.

The experience of primitive days was comfortably repeated: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

## CHAPTER XLII.

Texas Independence—The Republic Open to the Gospel—First Missionaries: Ruter, Fowler, Alexander—Alexander First and Last in the Field—Arkansas; Pioneers: William Stephenson, Henry Stevenson; Local Preachers: Alford, Kinney, Denton, the Orr Brothers—Organization of Texas Conference—Appointments—Centenary Year—Progress of the Church—General Missionary Secretaries: Bangs, Capers, Ames.

IN the spring of 1836 the decisive battle of San Jacinto was fought. The Texas Republic was set up; that wide door was thrown open to Protestantism, and before another year the episcopacy, in conjunction with the Missionary Society, had planned to enter it. Dr. Martin Ruter, President of Alleghany College, was appointed superintendent of the mission; and Littleton Fowler, then Agent for La Grange College, and Robert Alexander, stationed at Natchez, were his assistants.

Again Natchez is the starting-point of Church extension. Alexander being nearest the field was first in it, quite in advance of his co-laborers.\* He crossed the Sabine River on the 19th of August, 1837. His commission was an indefinite one—"Missionary to Texas." Having traveled a few miles he found a settlement and, calling the neighbors together, delivered his first sermon in a private house. His host, after a short time, entered his room and informed him that the people were unwilling to leave without another sermon. He held a camp-meeting in the neighborhood, where a class had been organized in 1834. After spending a few days more in forming the San Augustine Circuit, Alexander proceeded westward and cheered the hearts of a band of old Methodists at Washington, who had been praying for a preacher. A second camp-meeting was held. He had the coöperation of a few faithful local preachers who had gathered a score of members, of whom a goodly number were present at this camp-meeting west of the Brazos. For another month he traveled and preached in the scattered settlements, organizing classes and laying the foundation for future churches.

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\* History of Methodism in Texas, by Rev. Homer S. Thrall (Houston, 1872)—12mo, pages 210; and the Jubilee copy of the *Texas Christian Advocate*, 1884. To these valuable sources we are indebted for much of the following information.



Littleton Fowler entered the Republic *via* Red River, traveling in company with John B. Denton. Going on south, he preached in Nacogdoches, and then went to Washington, where he met Alexander, just after the close of his camp-meeting. He left for the Mississippi Conference, which met at Natchez, Dec. 6, but Fowler remained in the West and, being in Houston about the time Congress assembled, was elected chaplain of the Senate. He received from the proprietors of the city a title to a half-block of ground, upon which the Methodist church and parsonage in that city now stand.)

Dr. Ruter, with Mr. David Ayres, descended the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to Rodney; there took horse and, going west, met Alexander at the Sabine, as he was recrossing that border stream to report to his Conference. The two spent nearly the entire night in laying plans for future operations. The superintendent of the mission, with sagacious ardor, pursued his way to the Colorado. It is said that within three months he had gathered the names of three hundred persons formerly members of the Methodist Church. He preached before the Texas Congress, and devised liberal things for education. He selected points where to place ten or a dozen new laborers, and by correspondence and personal influence deeply interested public opinion in the United States for the evangelization of Texas. But in May, returning for his family, Dr. Ruter was prostrated with a fatal sickness, and made his honored grave in the mission field.

The Texas Conference was organized December 25, 1840, by Bishop Waugh, Thomas O. Summers being secretary. Robert Alexander was the precursor of an itinerant army which at his death numbered over five hundred. He lived to see Texas divided into six Annual Conferences (one for the German Methodists), with eight hundred local preachers and ninety thousand Church-members within its magnificent domain.\*

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\*The first list of appointments will always be an interesting record. *San Augustine District*: L. Fowler, P. E.; San Augustine, F. Wilson; Nacogdoches to be supplied; Harrison, N. Shook; Jasper, H. D. Palmer. *Galveston District*: S. A. Williams, P. E.; Galveston and Houston, Thomas O. Summers; Brazoria, A. P. Manley; Montgomery, Richard Owen, J. H. Collard; Liberty to be supplied; Crockett, Daniel Carl; Nashville, R. Crawford. *Rutersville District*: R. Alexander, P. E.; Austin, J. Haynie; Washington, Jesse Hord; Center Hill, R. H. Hill; Matagorda, D. N. V. Sullivan; Victoria, Joseph P. Sneed. Chauncey Richardson, President of Rutersville College.

Ruter fell early; Fowler lived not long, and left a son to take his place in the ranks. The memory of both is blessed. Other laborers, strong and well adapted, were raised up or brought in. But the name of Robert Alexander is preëminent. He entered the Tennessee Conference in 1831, in his twentieth year. After four years on circuits, he was promoted to the Chickasaw District, in Mississippi, and thence to his first station. When beginning his forty-five years' labor in Texas he was in the prime of a vigorous manhood, with an experience beyond his years. He stood six feet five inches high; was of a robust constitution. His hair was reddish, his features strong, his eye intelligent, and his courage equal to any emergency. He was blessed with an excellent judgment, and a mellow, Christian experience. The Conference memoir says, he "has left the impress of his character upon every Methodist institution in the State. As a preacher he was the peer of any of his comrades. Clear, logical, and fearless, he preached the gospel with a consciousness that his authority was not from men, but from God. No man has done more for the cause of Christ and public virtue in Texas, and every Christian communion in the State is indebted to him for part of its life and growth."

Let us not forget those who went before. William Stephenson was born at Ninety-Six, in South Carolina, and though forty-seven years old when admitted into Conference, he did thirty-nine years of most valuable labor. He itinerated from Missouri, through Arkansas and Louisiana to Texas. He was a good preacher—a great preacher, the people said. From 1821 to 1825 he was presiding elder on the Arkansas District, then a part of the Missouri Conference. Subsequently he was presiding elder on the Louisiana District from 1829 to 1833. This brought him to the Sabine River, and he went over occasionally and bore the gospel to the Americans who had settled there, disregarding the Romish interdicts of the Mexican authorities.

Another pioneer, but not akin, was Henry Stevenson, a native of Kentucky, converted and licensed to preach by Jesse Walker on the Illinois frontier in 1804. In 1817 he, with his growing family, settled in Hempstead county, Arkansas, and was useful as a local preacher. In 1820 he took work under the presiding elder. He was admitted on trial in the traveling connection, but his poverty and the cares of a large family made him unwilling

to continue. Henry Stevenson visited Austin's Colony as early as 1824, and preached near Washington and on the Colorado, near Columbus and San Felipe. He also paid these settlements a visit in 1828, and another in 1830. In June, 1834, he organized a church in San Augustine, and made such headway that, among the Mississippi appointments for 1835 we read: Texas Mission—Henry Stevenson. "His life," says our authority, "was spent upon the frontier, amid its perils and privations, and he accomplished an immense amount of good. He preached along the whole western boundary of settlements from the Missouri River to the Colorado, and left a name which is as ointment poured forth through all this vast region. It is hard to fathom the secret of his success. He was neither learned nor eloquent, in the ordinary acceptation of the terms, but he was a good man, and cherished a single purpose to glorify God and do all the good in his power."

Besides Needham Alford and the two Orrs—twin brothers—the most popular local preacher in prehistoric Texas Methodism was John W. Kinney, a son-in-law of Barnabas McHenry, who crossed the Brazos in 1833, and preached from Bastrop to Gonzales and Brazoria, and was ready with a camp-meeting and membership when Alexander reached his neighborhood four years later. J. B. Denton was killed in an Indian raid.

While in session at Cincinnati the General Conference heard the news of the battle of San Jacinto; at the next session, in Baltimore, it authorized the organization of the Texas Conference. Such had been the extension of the field that there were in 1840 twenty-eight Annual Conferences, and five others were constituted at this session. For the first time in twelve years, petitions were sent in asking for the election of presiding elders by the Annual Conferences, and also praying for a "moderate episcopacy." All these petitions came from New England.

The session at Baltimore was enlivened by the presence of the Rev. Robert Newton, from England, and the Rev. Messrs. Ryerson, from Canada. The eloquent English delegate not only was heard with delight and profit from the pulpit and platform, but he preached in the open air to immense crowds, showing on a Baltimore square the secret of gospel power that had triumphed on Moorfield Common a hundred years before.

Bishop Soule was appointed a fraternal delegate to the British



Conference in 1842, with the Rev. Thomas B. Sargent as traveling companion. Bishop Hedding received a similar appointment to the Canada Conference.

The Rev. Nelson Reed, the oldest traveling preacher in the United States, though not a member, was invited to a seat on the platform. Fifty-six years before, he had taken part in the organization of the Church in that city.

In February, 1836, the Book Concern was burned. The new buildings on Mulberry street and the stock were consumed, and for a loss of \$250,000 there was a recoverable insurance of only \$25,000. But from North and South donations to the amount of \$90,000 were realized, and the agents with increasing patronage went forward with unchecked prosperity.

The Church was feeling joyfully the results of the Centenary Celebration of 1839. English Methodism raised a million of dollars that year; America, about \$600,000; and the statistics of Methodism throughout the world showed 1,171,000 members. To-day, churches and schools throughout the country bear the name of "Centenary," dating from that year. The statistical review was inspiring, and a better acquaintance with their own history, institutions, and doctrines was grateful and invigorating to the Episcopal Methodists. They numbered, at this time, 749,216 members, 3,557 traveling preachers, and 5,856 local preachers. The Missionary Society was reported as being in a flourishing condition, having appropriated \$411,810 during the four preceding years, and it more than doubled the collections of 1839 in 1840. Three General Secretaries were appointed—Dr. Bangs remained at New York; for the South, Dr. Capers was elected, and for the West, the Rev. E. R. Ames.

The prospect was full of hope; the time, propitious. So true is it, that the Church has nothing to fear from foes without, if there is peace within.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

The Situation—Abolitionism a Failure in the Church, a Success Outside of it—  
Meeting of General Conference in 1844: Proceedings in Bishop Andrew's Case;  
The Griffith Resolution; The Finley Substitute; Drift of Debate; Extracts  
from a Few Speeches; The Final Vote; The Protest; The Plan of Separation.

WE have seen Episcopal Methodism, by the blessing of God upon its polity and doctrines, spreading the gospel over all these lands. It has shown conservative as well as progressive power. Four large secessions and one peaceable separation have been endured, and yet every part of its government is maintained intact, and its strength has constantly increased. Internal elements, not germane to the system, have been eliminated; outward opposition has been overcome; and accessions to the membership have so overbalanced secessions that the growing statistics do not afford a hint of the years of the greatest withdrawal. The original doctrinal standards have been so well preserved that all the minor bodies agree on them, take them away with them, and are jealous of their right to them as a precious and peculiar heritage.

We have seen "modern abolitionism," an irrepressible and irritating humor in the body of this Methodism, come to a head. Under the leadership of Scott, Sunderland, and their company, it is drawn off, and the old Church experiences a sense of relief and bounds forward. Many Methodists in position to know, many in the North and East, said that all trouble was over; the triumph of conservatism was complete and its vindication glorious. But affairs were destined to take another turn. The abolitionists have lost the battle on the ecclesiastical arena; on the political, they may win it, and did. A new force was evolved and came into play. Birney, and Lundy, and Tappan, and Garrison, have been working away, and their work is now felt. They began their agitation not on the religious or loyal line; for the Bible and the Constitution were spurned, and the Methodist Church, with others, was honored with their denunciations. No minister could be found to officiate at the first meeting of the abolitionists in Boston. By and by Congress began to be plied with petitions, and slavery in the District of Columbia and slavery in the territories began to be discussed; and the utterances of infuriate

politicians on both sides became generators of public opinion. Parties were formed—municipal, State, and federal—so as to conciliate or take advantage of this new force.\* Though in the Church the movement had signally failed, the astute secular leaders were willing to accept aid from that quarter; and justice requires it to be said, aid was rendered so effectively that the complexion of “modern abolitionism” was changed, and it came, in the end, to conceive of itself not only as moral but religious.

One of the most incisive and candid Northern writers, who finally threw his whole weight against the South, testifies:

It is of the first importance for us fully to realize that the abolition movement was, in fact, an utter moral failure. It is a signal, popular illusion that original abolitionism was a great, successful moral reform. This error is propagated with much magniloquence by Mr. Garrison's latest biographer. You would think from the ordinary story that slavery was abolished by moral suasion, and that essentially by the Garrisonian programme. Quite the reverse. All Mr. Garrison did was to madden the slave-holders and bring on a war. The war might have created a slave empire, and have perpetuated the system forever. The abolition was not a moral achievement but a war measure.†

When this business passed into the realm of civil legislation it went to its right place. We say nothing here of the right or wrong methods pursued; but it belonged there. For obvious reasons, the question when taken up by politicians became more or less sectional; and when it became sectional it soon became unequal. Through the immigrant gates of Castle Garden poured hundreds of thousands annually to swell the ranks on one side. In 1838 England completed her scheme of emancipation in the West Indies, and the powerful pressure from that quarter was felt in getting up the sentiment that always precedes a new party. Englishmen are wise and, in whatever concerns themselves,

\*The New York State Anti-slavery Society, January, 1840, issued a call for a national convention at Albany on the first day of April ensuing, to discuss “the question of an independent nomination of abolition candidates for President and Vice-president of the United States, and if thought expedient to make such nominations for the friends of freedom to support at the next election.” The nominations were made. James Gillespie Birney, of Kentucky, and Thomas Earle, of Pennsylvania, were the candidates. Of two million and a half votes cast at that election, Birney and Earle received less than seven thousand. This was laughed at, but at the next presidential election Birney, and Morris of Ohio, received sixty-two thousand three hundred votes—an increase nearly tenfold; and soon the balance of power was wielded by them in some important elections. (Matlack.)

† D. D. Whedon, D.D., *Introduction Anti-slavery Struggle and Triumph: 1881.*



very practical. They did not deprive citizens of property held under a constitutional title, without compensation; they did not indulge their philanthropy at the expense of others, but paid \$100,000,000 for the eight hundred thousand slaves emancipated by Parliament. Similar propositions never tempered the schemes of American abolitionists. They even opposed the Colonization Society, whose office was to encourage voluntary emancipation by assisting emancipated negroes in returning to Africa. If, instead of being separated by a great distance from them, on tropic isles, these eight hundred thousand liberated negroes had been distributed throughout England, our English kinsmen would doubtless have given us a practical solution of the social and political problem that followed upon emancipation.

Omens of evil were felt on both sides, as Northern and Southern delegates assembled at the General Conference of 1844, in New York. On the surface all was peaceful; but a groundswell met them. New Hampshire memorials took exception to Dr. Capers, one of the "three General Secretaries of the Missionary Society," as a slave-holder. May 7th the appeal of a member from the Baltimore Conference was taken up. He was an elder; February before, he had married a young lady who owned a family of five slaves. At the session of Conference in March he was required, according to a usage of that body, to manumit them. Failing to comply, he was "suspended until the next Annual Conference, or until he assures the episcopacy that he has taken the necessary steps to secure the freedom of his slaves."

The case for the appellant was argued by Dr. William A. Smith, and for the Conference by Rev. John A. Collins, with eminent ability. It appeared in evidence that by the laws of Maryland the title and ownership inhered in the wife, and that a slave could not be emancipated and continue to reside in the State in the enjoyment of liberty. On the other hand, it was maintained that no slave-holder had ever been a member of the Baltimore Conference; the offending member knew this when he entered it, and he had the fact before him when he married; that this usage of the Conference had been uniformly insisted on in the case of others; that notwithstanding the stringency of the State law, slaves had been often manumitted and remained undisturbed in the State; and as for the title, it was assumed that he could persuade his wife to join him in the act of manumission.

The reader of the journal, which is spread out with unusual fullness at this point, cannot fail to see that the chief interest in this case lay in its bearing upon another, of wider import, and that it was debated and decided with the latter constantly in view. On May 11, a vote was taken, and the motion to reverse the sentence of the Conference failed—56 ayes, 117 noes.

The hearts of men who loved God and who loved the Church were painfully conscious of the chilling shadow of an impending conflict falling upon their love for each other. They were moved to seek some remedy. Therefore, on motion of Dr. Capers, on May 14, the following preamble and resolution were adopted:

In view of the distracting agitation which has so long prevailed on the subject of slavery and abolition, and especially the difficulties under which we labor in the present General Conference on account of the relative position of our brethren North and South on this perplexing question, therefore,

*Resolved*, That a committee of six be appointed to confer with the Bishops, and report within two days, as to the possibility of adopting some plan, and what, for the permanent pacification of the Church.\*

In seconding the motion Dr. Olin, who had been called to the place vacated by the death of Dr. Fisk, at Middletown, said:

He had feared for these two or three days that though possibly they might escape the disasters that threatened them, it was not probable. He had seen the cloud gathering, so dark that it seemed to him there was no hope left for them unless God should give them hope. It might be from his relation to both extremities that, inferior as might be his means of forming conclusions on other topics, he had some advantages on this; and from an intimate acquaintance with the feelings of his brethren in the work he saw little ground of encouragement to hope. It appears to me (he continued) that we stand committed on this question by our principles and views of policy, and neither of us dare move a step from our position. Let us keep away from the controversy until brethren from opposite sides have come together. I confess I turn away from it with sorrow, and a deep feeling of apprehension that the difficulties that are upon us now threaten to be unmanageable. I feel it in my heart, and never felt on any subject as I do on this; and I will take it on me to say freely that I do not see how Northern men can yield their ground, or Southern men give up theirs. I do indeed believe that if our affairs remain in their present position, and this General Conference do not speak out clearly and distinctly on the subject, however unpalatable it may be, we cannot go home under this distracting question without a certainty of breaking up our Conferences. I have been to eight or ten of the Northern Conferences, and spoken freely with men of every class, and firmly believe that, with the fewest exceptions, they are influenced by the most ardent and the strongest desire to maintain the discipline of our Church. Will the Southern men believe

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\* Committee: Capers, Olin, Winans, Early, Hamline, and Crandall.

me in this--when I say I am sincere, and well informed on the subject? The men who stand here as abolitionists are as ardently attached to Methodist episcopacy as you all. I believe it in my heart. Your Northern brethren, who seem to you to be arrayed in a hostile attitude, have suffered a great deal before they have taken their position, and they come up here distressed beyond measure, and disposed, if they believed they could, without destruction and ruin to the Church, to make concession. It may be that both parties will consent to come together and talk over the matter fairly, and unbosom themselves, and speak all that is in their hearts; and as lovers of Christ keep out passion and prejudice, and with much prayer call down the Holy Spirit upon their deliberations; and feeling the dire necessity that oppresses both parties, they will at least endeavor to adopt some plan of pacification, that if they go away it may not be without hope of meeting again as brethren. I look to this measure with desire rather than with hope. With regard to our Southern brethren--and I hold that on this question at least I may speak with some confidence--if they concede what the Northern brethren wish, if they concede that holding slaves is incompatible with holding their ministry, they may as well go to the Rocky Mountains as to their own sunny plains. The people would not bear it. They feel shut up to their principles on this point. But if our difficulties are *unmanageable*, let our spirit be right. If we must part, let us meet and pour out our tears together; and let us not give up until we have tried. I cannot speak on this subject without deep emotion. If we push our principles so far as to break up the Connection, this may be the last time we meet. I fear it! I fear it! I see no way of escape. If we find any, it will be in mutual moderation, in calling for help from the God of our fathers, and in looking upon each other as we were wont to do. These are the general objects I had in view in seconding the resolution, as they are of him who moved it.

The reverend gentleman sat down amid deep and hallowed excitement.

On motion of Dr. Durbin it was resolved that to-morrow be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation before God, and prayer for his blessing upon the committee.

Four days afterward Bishop Soule reported back: "The Committee of Conference have instructed me to report that, after a calm and deliberate investigation of the subject submitted to their consideration, they are unable to agree upon any plan of compromise to reconcile the views of the Northern and Southern Conferences."

On motion of Mr. Collins, the Committee on Episcopacy were instructed to ascertain the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew and "report the results of their investigation to-morrow morning."

On May 22, Dr. Paine, chairman, submitted the following:

"The Committee on Episcopacy, to whom was referred a resolution, submitted yesterday, instructing them to inquire whether any one of the Superintendents is connected with slavery, beg leave to present the following as their report on the subject.



"The committee had ascertained, previous to the reference of the resolution, that Bishop Andrew is connected with slavery, and had obtained an interview with him on the subject; and having requested him to state the whole facts in the premises, hereby present a written communication from him in relation to this matter, and beg leave to offer it as his statement and explanation of the case:"

*To the Committee on Episcopacy*—Dear Brethren: In reply to your inquiry I submit the following statement of all the facts bearing on my connection with slavery. Several years since an old lady, of Augusta, Georgia, bequeathed to me a mulatto girl, in trust that I should take care of her until she should be nineteen years of age; that with her consent I should then send her to Liberia; and that in case of her refusal, I should keep her, and make her as free as the laws of the State of Georgia would permit. When the time arrived, she refused to go to Liberia, and of her own choice remains legally my slave, although I derive no pecuniary profit from her. She continues to live in her own house on my lot; and has been and is at present at perfect liberty to go to a free State at her pleasure; but the laws of the State will not permit her emancipation, nor admit such deed of emancipation to record, and she refuses to leave the State. In her case, therefore, I have been made a slave-holder legally, but not with my own consent.

Secondly. About five years since, the mother of my former wife left to her daughter, not to me, a negro boy; and as my wife died without a will more than two years since, by the laws of the State he becomes legally my property. In this case, as in the former, emancipation is impracticable in the State; but he shall be at liberty to leave the State whenever I shall be satisfied that he is prepared to provide for himself, or I can have sufficient security that he will be protected and provided for in the place to which he may go.

Third. In the month of January last I married my present wife, she being at the time possessed of slaves, inherited from her former husband's estate, and belonging to her. Shortly after my marriage, being unwilling to become their owner, regarding them as strictly hers, and the law not permitting their emancipation, I secured them to her by a deed of trust.

It will be obvious to you from the above statement of facts that I have neither bought nor sold a slave; that in the only two instances in which I am legally a slave-holder emancipation is impracticable. As to the servants owned by my wife, I have no legal responsibility in the premises, nor could my wife emancipate them if she desired to do so. I have thus plainly stated all the facts in the case, and submit the statement for the consideration of the General Conference. Yours respectfully,

JAMES O. ANDREW.

The report was made the order of the day for May 23, when Alfred Griffith and John Davis, of the Baltimore Conference, offered an historical preamble and the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the Rev. James O. Andrew be, and he is hereby affectionately, requested to resign his office as one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The time limit was removed, and Mr. Griffith led off in the discussion. His speech furnished the key-note of several that followed: "A bishop among us is, therefore, only an officer of the General Conference, created for specific purposes, and for no other than the purposes specified."

Mr. Sandford (of New York) said: "The matter seemed to him to be confined to one single point—the *expediency* of making this request of Bishop Andrew. He presumed that no man would dispute their right to make the request, though they might differ as to the expediency of doing it. In the majority of [Annual] Conferences which compose our Church, if something be not done to remove the evil connected with the superintendency of Bishop Andrew out of the way, they could not possibly avoid convulsions, and the loss of very large numbers of members, and give opportunity to their enemies to exert a destructive influence within the ranks of their community. This was clear and certain, and did not admit of a single doubt; and this he believed to be the firm conviction on the mind of the Conference. It was on this, and on this alone, that he wished to rest the expediency of the measure now proposed."

Dr. Winans (of Mississippi) was the first speaker on the Southern side; a striking figure—tall and raw-boned. The veins of his stringy neck might be seen, swollen with earnestness, for he spoke in Italics and wore no cravat. His limp shirt-collar lay around, his clothes were baggy, and his shoes tied with strings; but his eye was bloodshot with intensity, and his head a magnificent dome of thought. Exact, logical, forcible, he had become known in the radical controversy of 1824, as unsurpassed in debate. Other elements besides ecclesiastical entered into *this* question, and he spoke in "the calmness of despair:"

Well, he was a slave-holder in 1840, exposed to the malediction of the North, and just as unfit for the general superintendency as in January, 1844. And what harm was there in marrying a woman who had been pronounced by one of the most venerated of our ministers to be as fit a lady for a bishop's wife as he ever saw? What evil had he done by becoming a slave-holder further by that marriage, when he was already a slave-holder beyond control? What had he done by that marriage to prejudice his case? Just nothing at all, for he was already a slave-holder by immutable necessity. In forming a matrimonial alliance, in seeking one who was to become the mother of his children and the companion of his declining years, he had married a pious and estimable lady, and that is the whole matter; and yet he is advised to leave the superintendency on this ground.

What has he done by executing the deed of trust? What did he do to alter

the position of the slaves? Did he bring upon them any consequences prejudicial to them? Did he incur any obligation to deprive that lady of her property because she had given him her hand? Why, the position will be this: that James O. Andrew must cease to be a bishop because he has married a lady; for he has done these negroes no harm by his momentary possession of them.

But, sir, the main point relied upon in this matter is the expediency of the course contemplated. Expediency! Or, in other words, such a state of things has been gotten up in the North and in the West as renders it necessary for Bishop Andrew to retire from the office of the superintendency if we would preserve the union of the Church. Sir, I will meet this by another argument on expediency: by the vote contemplated by this body and solicited by this resolution, you render it expedient—nay, more, you render it indispensable; nay, more, you render it uncontrollably necessary—that a large portion of the Church (and, permit me to add, a portion always conformed in their views and practices to the Discipline), I say that by this vote you render it indispensably, ay uncontrollably, necessary that that portion of the Church should — I dread to pronounce the word, but you understand me. Yes, sir, you create an uncontrollable necessity that there should be a disconnection of that large portion of the Church from your body. If you pass this action in the mildest form in which you can approach the Bishop, you will throw every minister in the South *hors du combat*; you cut us off from all connection with masters and servants, and leave us no option—God is my witness that I speak with all sincerity of purpose toward you—but to be disconnected from your body. If such necessity exists on your part to drive this man from his office, we reassert that this must be the result of your action. We have no will, no choice, in this thing.

Dr. Lovick Pierce (of Georgia), a member of the first delegated General Conference, which met in New York in 1812, said:

Allow me to say, the adoption of the resolution on the ground of expediency is, in the very nature of the case, to invert the established order of the New Testament. In the difficulties which arose in the Church in the days of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, he said, in reference to this point, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." Shall we ask Bishop Andrew to pay this tribute to expediency? Why, if it were lawful to demand it, and the yielding of it would produce such disastrous results as must be produced, it would be inexpedient for this body of God-fearing ministers to make any such demand. To the law and to the testimony I feel myself bound closely to adhere. Of all notions that were ever defended before a body of Christian ministers, the notion of asking an act of this sort on the ground of expediency, when it is as inexpedient for one portion of a united body of Christians to do this as it is expedient for the other that it should be done, is to me the most fearful mockery of sound logic. Do that which is inexpedient for us, because for you it is expedient! Never, while the heavens are above the earth, let that be recorded on the journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church! Do you ask us how this matter is to be met? It is to met by the conservative principle and the compromise laws of this book of Discipline. Show your people that Bishop Andrew has violated any one of the established rules and regulations of this Church, and you put yourselves in the right, and us in the wrong.



Mr. Coleman (of Troy) "would give his vote in favor of the resolution, but would not like to be considered an enemy of his Southern brethren. He had opposed abolitionism from the commencement. He, in connection with other Northern brethren, had had to fight the battles of their Southern brethren. He had expected a most peaceful Conference, supposing as he did that the fire-brands had left their ranks last year. The Southern brethren knew little of the labors of the Northern men to secure their comfort and safety. Give them a slave-holding bishop, and they make the whole of the North a magazine of gunpowder, and the bishop a fire-brand in the midst."

Mr. Stringfield (of Holston) argued: "It is inexpedient that Bishop Andrew should resign. If the Bishop be shuffled out of office, some one must be elected to fill his place, and such a one, whoever he may be, will meet with as little favor in the South as Bishop Andrew would, with all his disabilities, in the North."

Mr. Spencer (of Pittsburg) spoke to the point: "We hear much concerning the constitution. The word 'constitutional' is repeated again and again. Here I am at a loss. I cannot tell what brethren mean. I suppose the constitution of our Church to be embodied in our Articles of Religion, our Restrictive Rules, and our General Rules. But where is it said in these that a slave-holding Bishop must remain in office despite the General Conference? or that no rule can be made to touch such a case? Nowhere. Then is it not plain that these are high-sounding words used without meaning? But, sir, much is said of expediency. Well, let us look at expediency. It is alleged that it would be a dreadful thing to pass the resolution before us, as a matter of expediency. This is a grave subject. But is not expediency at the foundation of many grave and important subjects? Mr. President, how did you and your colleagues get into the episcopal office? Expediency put you there, expediency keeps you there, and when expediency requires it you shall be removed from your seats—yes, every one of you. Expediency is the foundation of our episcopacy. Nay, more—it is the very basis of Methodism. Bishop Andrew is a bishop of the whole Methodist Episcopal Church, and is in duty bound to go to any part of it that its interests may require. If he cannot get rid of slavery where he is, let him go where he can."

Dr. Bangs (of New York) said: "Now, the doctrine of expediency has been referred to. Let me give you one item of expediency that the Apostle Paul practiced: 'If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend;' and if Bishop Andrew had practiced that kind of expediency we should not have had the present difficulty."

Mr. Cass: "The New Hampshire Conference, which I in part represent, has solemnly protested against having a slave-holder for a bishop. And thousands of our members have also sent up memorials to this effect. Sir, I tell you that, in my opinion, a slave-holder cannot sit in the episcopal chair in an Annual Conference in New England; and if Bishop Andrew holds his office, there will be large secessions, or whole Conferences will leave. If this Conference does any thing less than to declare slavery is a moral evil, we stand on a volcano at the North."

Dr. Green (of Tennessee): "It has been asked, Mr. President, what harm it would do to us in the South. Well, let me tell you what I think the effect will be. Suppose Bishop Andrew be deposed, and we from the South tamely submit—how could I return to my work and put my head out of the top of a pulpit and attempt to preach? If Bishop Andrew be deposed, and the South were to submit—that is, the preachers in the South—to such an unjust and extrajudicial proceeding, it would disable the preachers in such a manner that we could not serve our people, and it is very certain that those who deposed him could never supply our place. There are difficulties for the North, and, as far as I can learn, I am willing to give them every advantage without destroying the South. If this Conference were to rescind the 'Few resolution,' we could stand that; and the decision in the Baltimore case will not destroy us quite; and I suppose when we shall come to the election of bishops, that they (having the majority) will select brethren from the non-slaveholding Conferences. Is that not enough to intrench them from the attacks of abolition? I should think so. It is no small matter with the South that none of our Southern preachers can be elected a bishop. Yet we will not fall out with you because you dare not elect a brother from the South, but we will never submit to the doctrine that it shall not be done."

The original motion was earnestly discussed for a part of two days; but in the weakness of its long, rambling historical preamble, as well as on its own merits, it seemed not to meet the exigency: then J. B. Finley and J. M. Trimble, of the Ohio Conference, offered a substitute:

Whereas the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise; and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant General Superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it: therefore,

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains.

The debate was renewed upon this slightly altered presentation of the case. Of the numerous and excellent speeches we may only quote enough to indicate the drift of plea and argument. Let us hear first, and at greater length than we can afford to others, the eloquent man who spoke for both sides—Dr. Olin:

If there ever was a question beset with great practical difficulties, surely it is that under which we now groan. Yet our powers are so great as to allow us to make some provision against them, and to some extent at least meet the wants of the Church in this great emergency. We may do much, and we may make many arrangements in regard to the episcopacy; but our powers are still limited and restricted in two things. We cannot do away with the episcopacy; we cannot infringe upon its character as a general superintendency. I believe we are all prepared to recognize the right of Southern brethren to hold slaves under the provisions of the Discipline. We shall acknowledge and guarantee the entire of the privileges and immunities of all parties in the Church. I here declare that if a remedy should be proposed that would trench on the constitutional claims of Southern ministers, I would not, to save the Church from any possible calamity, violate this great charter of our rights. I am glad of the opportunity of saying that no man who is a Methodist, and deserves a place among us, can call in question here any rights secured by our charter. I do not say that he may not be a very honest or a very pious man who doubts the compatibility of slave-holding on the conditions of the Discipline, with the ministerial office; but in this he is not a Methodist. He may be a very good man, but a very bad Methodist; and if such a man doubts if the Church will reform, or is too impatient of delay, let him—as I would in his place—do as our friends in New England did last year, go to some other Church, or set up one for himself.

Not only is holding slaves, on the conditions and under the restrictions of the Discipline, no disqualification for the ministerial office, but I will go a little farther and say that slave-holding is not constitutionally a forfeiture of a man's right, if he may be said to have one, to the office of a bishop. The Church, spread out through all the land, will always determine for itself what are disqual-



ifications and what are not, and it has a perfect right to determine whether slaveholding, or abolitionism, or any other fact, shall be taken into consideration in its elections.

These are my principles. I have never doubted with regard to them. I will add that I can never give a vote which does violence to my sentiments in regard to the religious aspect of the subject. I here declare that if ever I saw the graces of the Christian ministry displayed, or its virtues developed, it has been among slave-holders. I wish here to divest myself of what, to some, may seem an advantage that does not belong to me. I will not conceal—I avow that I was a slave-holder and a minister at the South, and I never dreamed that my right to the ministry was questionable, or that in the sight of God I was less fitted to preach the gospel on that account. And if the state of my health had not driven me away from that region, I should probably have been a slave-holder to this day. In this day of reform and manifold suggestions I go farther, and say that, if by a vote of this General Conference you might call in question the right of our Southern brethren to the ministry, and make their claim to the sacred office dependent on their giving immediate freedom to their slaves, I do not think that that would be a blessing to the slaves or to the Church. I do not believe the slave fares worse for having a Christian master, and I think the preachers may have more of public confidence on our present plan. I know these opinions may by some be regarded as unsound; and I make them not because they have any special value or novelty, but because I profess to speak my sentiments freely.

With regard to the particular case before us, I feel constrained to make one or two remarks. If ever there was a man worthy to fill the episcopal office by his disinterestedness, his love of the Church, his ardent, melting sympathy for all the interests of humanity, but above all for his uncompromising and unreserved advocacy of the interest of the slave—if these are qualifications for the office of a bishop, then James O. Andrew is preëminently fitted to hold that office. I know him well. He was the friend of my youth; and although by his experience and his position fitted to be a father, yet he made me a brother, and no man has more fully shared my sympathies, or more intimately known my heart, for these twenty years. His house has been my home, on his bed have I lain in sickness, and he, with his sainted wife now in heaven, has been my comforter and nurse. No question under heaven could have presented itself so painfully oppressive to my feelings as the one now before us. If I had a hundred votes, and Bishop Andrew were not pressed by the difficulties which now rest upon him, without any wrong intention on his part, I am sure, he is the man to whom I would give them all. I know no man who has been so bold an advocate for the interest of the slaves; and when I have been constrained to refrain from saying what perhaps I should have said, I have heard him at camp-meetings, and on other public occasions, call fearlessly on masters to see to the spiritual and temporal interests of their slaves as a high Christian duty. Excepting one honored brother, whose name will hereafter be recorded as one of the greatest benefactors of the African race, I know of no man who has done so much for the slave as Bishop Andrew.

It will be readily inferred, from what I have said, that if we cannot act without calling in question the rights of the Southern brethren, we had better, in my opinion, not act at all; for I believe it would be better to submit to the greatest calamities than infringe upon our own constitution. Yet it seems to me that we

are not shut up to such a disastrous course, and that we may so dispose of this case as to escape both these difficulties. We cannot punish. I would not vote for any resolution that would even censure; and yet, with the powers that confessedly belong to the General Conference, I trust some measure may be adopted that may greatly palliate and diminish, if it cannot wholly avert, the dangers that threaten us. The substitute now proposed I regard as such a measure. In it this General Conference expresses its wish and will that, under existing circumstances—meaning by that word not merely the fact that Bishop Andrew has become a slaveholder, but the state of the Church, the sentiments that prevail—the excitement, and the deep feeling of the people on the subject; feeling, it may be, which disqualifies them for calm, dispassionate views in the premises; that under these circumstances, it is the wish and the will of the brethren of this Conference that Bishop Andrew, against whom we bring no charge, on whose fair character we fix no reproach, should, for the present, refrain from the exercise of his episcopal functions. This resolution proposes no punishment; it does not censure. It expresses no opinion of the Bishop's conduct. It only seeks to avert disastrous results by the exercise of the conservative, of the self-preserving powers of this Conference.

I know the difficulties of the South. I know the excitement that is likely to prevail among the people there. Yet allowing our worst fears all to be realized, the South will have this advantage over us—the Southern Conferences are likely, in any event, to harmonize among themselves; they will form a compact body. In our Northern Conferences this will be impossible in the present state of things. They cannot bring their whole people to act together on one common ground. Stations and circuits will be so weakened and broken as in many instances to be unable to sustain their ministry. I speak on this point in accordance with the conviction of my own judgment, after having traveled three thousand miles through the New England and New York Conferences, that if some action is not had on this subject calculated to hold out hope—to impart a measure of satisfaction to the people—there will be distractions and divisions ruinous to souls, and fatal to the permanent interests of the Church.

I feel, sir, that if this great difficulty shall result in separation from our Southern brethren, we lose not our right-hand merely, but our very heart's blood. Over such an event I should not cease to pour out my prayers and tears as over a grievous and unmitigated calamity. It was in that part of our Zion that God, for Christ's sake, converted my soul. There I first entered on the Christian ministry. From thence came the beloved, honored brethren who now surround me, with whom and among whom I have labored and suffered and rejoiced, and seen the doings of the right-hand of the Son of God. If the day shall come when we must be separated by lines of demarkation, I shall yet think often of those beyond with the kindest, warmest feelings of an honest Christian heart. But, sir, I will yet trust that we may put far off this evil day. If we can pass such a measure as will shield our principles from all infringement; if we can send forth such a measure as will neither injure nor justly offend the South, as shall neither censure nor dishonor Bishop Andrew, and yet shall meet the pressing wants of the Church, and above all, if Almighty God shall be pleased to help by pouring out his Spirit upon us, we may yet avoid the rock on which we now seem but too likely to split.

A remarkable speech was that by Dr. Hamline, of Ohio—deftly dovetailed and eloquently spoken; his opponents found it no easy task to nicely unravel, and in detail to answer, the points of this speech, admirable for its literary finish and temper.\* He admitted that the argument from “expediency” was out of place if the act was unconstitutional; it was never expedient to violate law. He considered this a *mandamus* measure. It wrought a suspension or deposition for “improper conduct;” “a summary removal from office,” not from the ministry, until the cause was removed. The General Conference, according to his view, beyond certain restrictions, few and simple, has supreme legislative, judicial, and executive power. They could not “do away episcopacy”—one of the Restrictive Rules forbids that; but they could do as they pleased with an *episcopos*. A pastor, or presiding elder, or steward, or class-leader, may be removed from a higher to a lower office, or from office altogether, by a superior, without notice, trial, or cause assigned. All ranks of officers are subjected to summary removals from office for any thing unfitting for that office; so a bishop may be deposed from office summarily, and for improprieties which, if even innocent in themselves, hinder his usefulness. No statutory law was needed for this; and if any statutory law stood in their way, they could set it aside—such was their supremacy.

Without entering into the details of this argument, Drs. Smith and Winans struck at the substance of it as utterly subversive of the rights of the minority, and as nullifying one of the coördinate branches of the Church government. A General Conference, acting in a judicial or other capacity, is bound to proceed by its own laws, and to observe its own statutes, until properly altered; as much so as an inferior judicatory. Whoever claims protection according to those statutory laws is constitutionally entitled to it; otherwise a majority, doing its own will, is an unbearable tyranny. The case under consideration, they maintained, was specifically covered and protected by laws and statutes which had stood since 1816, and been reiterated, and had so kept the peace between the two sections of the Church that the sacredness of a compromise attached to them.

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\* The analysis is well presented in an able discussion: “The Disruption of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1844-1846; comprising a thirty years’ history of the relations of the two Methodisms,” by Ed. H. Myers, D.D.; 12mo, pages 216.



The extreme position on episcopacy which the majority took,\* in order to justify a course that was felt to be necessary, is thus met in the protest of the minority, presented after the vote:

As the Methodist Episcopal Church is now organized, and according to its organization since 1784, the episcopacy is a coördinate branch, the executive department proper of the government. A bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church is not a mere creature, is in no prominent sense an officer, of the General Conference. The bishops are, beyond a doubt, an integral constituent part of the General Conference, made such by law and the constitution; and because elected by the General Conference, it does not follow that they are subject to the will of that body, except in conformity with legal right and the provisions of law in the premises. In this sense, and so viewed, they are subject to the General Conference, and this is sufficient limitation of their power, unless the government itself is to be considered irregular and unbalanced in the coördinate relations of its parts. In a sense by no means unimportant the General Conference is as much the creature of the episcopacy as the bishops are the creatures of the General Conference. As executive officers, as well as pastoral overseers, they belong to the Church as such, and not to the General Conference as one of its organs of action merely.

Because bishops are in part constituted by the General Conference, the power of removal does not follow. Episcopacy, even in the Methodist Church, is not a mere appointment to labor. It is an official consecrated station under the protection of law, and can only be dangerous as the law is bad or the Church corrupt. The power to appoint does not necessarily involve the power to remove; and when the appointing power is derivative—as in the case of the General Conference—the power of removal does not accrue at all, unless by consent of the coördinate branches of the government, expressed by law made and provided in the case. When the Legislature of a State—to appeal to analogy for illustration—appoints a judge or senator in Congress, does the judge or senator thereby become the officer or creature of the Legislature, or is he the officer or senatorial representative of the State, of which the Legislature is the mere organ? And does the power of removal follow that of appointment? The answer is negative in both cases, and applies equally to the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who, instead of being the officers and creatures of the General Conference, are *de facto* the officers and servants of the Church; and no right of removal accrues, except in accordance with the provisions of law. But when a bishop is suspended, or informed that it is the wish or will of the General Conference that he cease to perform the functions of bishop, for doing what the law of the same body allows him to do, and of course without incurring the hazard of punishment, or even blame, then the whole procedure becomes an outrage upon justice, as well as upon law.

\* Dr. Myers, on the "Disruption," says: "The historical development of our episcopacy will prove that the bishops are not 'creatures' of the General Conference, and consequently mutable functionaries of that body, removable at will, without charge or trial. The Methodist Episcopal Church—much less its General Conference—never created its episcopacy. On the contrary, the episcopacy organized, and gave ecclesiastical vitality to, a number of 'Societies,' and constituted them into the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1788 Mr. Wesley's name was inserted at the head of our Minutes as the fountain of our episcopal office. Methodism did not exist in organic Church-form prior to 1784, and its bishops existed before it, and reduced it to that form." (Myers on the Disruption, page 73.)

Before debate closed, Bishop Soule addressed the Conference. As a preliminary, he read a portion of the Episcopal Address of 1840, alluding to similar agitations:

But can we, as ministers of the gospel, and servants of a Master "whose kingdom is not of this world," promote these important objects in any way so truly and permanently as by pursuing the course just pointed out? Can we, at this eventful crisis, render a better service to our country than by laying aside all interference with relations authorized and established by the civil laws, and applying ourselves wholly and faithfully to what specially appertains to our "high and holy calling," to teach and enforce the moral obligations of the gospel, in application to all the duties growing out of the different relations in society? By a diligent devotion to this evangelical employment, with a humble and steadfast reliance upon the aid of Divine influence, the number of "believing masters" and servants may be constantly increased, the kindest sentiments and affections cultivated, domestic burdens lightened, mutual confidence cherished, and the peace and happiness of society be promoted. While, on the other hand, if past history affords us any correct rules of judgment, there is much cause to fear that the influence of our sacred office, if employed in interference with the relation itself, and consequently with the civil institutions of the country, will rather tend to prevent than to accomplish these desirable ends.

"Sir," said he, "I have read this extract that the members of this General Conference who were not present at the last session, and this listening assembly, who may not have heard it before, may understand distinctly the ground on which I, with my colleagues, stand in regard to these questions. The only subject which has awakened my sympathies during this whole discussion is the condition of my suffering brethren of the colored race, and this never fails to do it. No matter where I meet the man of color, whether in the South or in the North, with the amount of liberty he enjoys, the sympathies of my nature are all awakened for him. Could I restore bleeding Africa to freedom, to independence, to the rights—to all the rights—of man, I would most gladly do it. But this I cannot do—you cannot do. And if I cannot burst the bonds of the colored man, I will not strengthen them. If I cannot extend to him all the good I would, I will never shut him out from the benefits which I have it in my power to bestow." He addressed himself to the main point—the ground assumed alike by the supporters of the original resolution and of the substitute:

I wish to say explicitly that if the Superintendents are only to be regarded as the officers of the General Conference, liable to be deposed at will by a simple majority of this body without a form of trial, no obligation existing, growing out of the constitution and laws of the Church, even to assign cause wherefore—every

thing I have to say hereafter is powerless and falls to the ground. But, strange as it may seem, although I have had the privilege to be a member of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever since its present organization; though I was honored with a seat in the convention of ministers which organized it, I have heard for the first time, either on the floor of this Conference, in an Annual Conference, or through the whole of the private membership of the Church, this doctrine advanced; this is the first time I ever heard it. I desire to understand my landmarks as a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church—not the Bishop of the General Conference, not the Bishop of any Annual Conference. I thought that the constitution of the Church, the solemn vows of ordination, the parchment which I hold under the signatures of the departed dead—I thought that these defined my landmarks; I thought that these had prescribed my duties. Whether this Conference is to sustain the position on which I have acted, or not, they are very soon to settle in the vote which is before them; I mean, they are to settle this question, whether it is the right of this body to depose a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church—to depose my colleague, to depose me—without a form of trial. See ye to that. Without specification of wrong, and by almost universal acclamation that Bishop Andrew has been unblamable in his Christian character; that he has discharged the duties of his sacred office with integrity, with usefulness, and in good faith—with this declaration before the world, will this Conference occupy this position: that they have power, authority, to depose Bishop Andrew, without a form of trial, without charge, and without being once called on to answer for himself in the premises (what he did say was voluntary)?

Well, brethren, I had understood from the beginning that special provision was made for the trial of a bishop. The constitution has provided that no preacher was to be deprived of the right of trial, and of the right of appeal; but, sir, if I understand the doctrine advanced and vindicated, it is that you may depose a bishop without the form of trial; you may depose him without any obligation to show cause. It seems to me that the Church has made special provision for the trial of the Bishop, for the special reason that he has no appeal. I do not hesitate to say to you that if the relation in which I have been placed to the Methodist Episcopal Church, under solemn vows of ordination, is to stand on the voice of a simple majority of this body, without a form of trial, I have some doubt whether there is the man on this floor who would be willing to stand in my place. You may immolate me, but you cannot immolate me on a Southern altar; you cannot immolate me on a Northern altar; I can only be immolated on the altar of the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. What do I mean by this? I mean—call it a compact, call it compromise, constitution, Discipline, what you will—I mean on the doctrines and provisions of this book, and I consider this as the bond of union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Here, then, I plant my feet, and here I stand. I hold that the General Conference has an indisputable right to arraign at her tribunal every Bishop; to try us there; to find us guilty of any offense with which we are charged on evidence, and to excommunicate—expel us. I am always ready to appear before that body in this regard. I recognize fully their right. But not for myself, not for these men on my right-hand and on my left-hand, but for the Church of God, let me entreat you not to rush upon the resolution which is now before you. Posterity, sir, will review your actions; history will record them.



Bishop Soule's remarks, emphasized by the tone and presence and prestige of the speaker, produced a profound effect on the members. They remembered that at the age of twenty-seven he had drafted the constitution; he had served under it, understood it, loved it. When on a former occasion that instrument was in peril he, more than any other man living, saved it; and now again, in old age, he rose erect to its defense. But times had changed. Priam's dart was hurled with the ancient force, and hit the mark; but a strange foe confronted him. Some who were present have told how the ranks of the majority fell back and were broken; nor did they rally until John P. Durbin took the floor. He argued concerning the episcopacy: "Whence, then, is it derived? Solely, sir, from the suffrages of the General Conference. There, and there only, is the source of episcopal power in our Church. And the same power that conferred the authority can remove it." With that weird power of speech of which he was master, he gathered up and re-presented the pleas already made for the action invoked, and restored the lines of the prosecution. It was a noble and unique contest. For the South stood up the veteran from Maine, backed by the minority, pleading for the constitution: for the North, the son of Kentucky, with the majority at his back.

On May 30, when nearing a vote, the Conference was requested by Bishop Hedding "to hold no afternoon session, and thus allow the Bishops to consult together, with a hope that they might be able to present a plan of adjusting our present difficulties." "The suggestion," says the journal, "was received with general and great cordiality."

May 31, the Bishops submitted a paper containing their plan. Convinced that "disastrous results are the almost inevitable consequences of present action on the question now pending," they unanimously recommend the postponement of further action until the next General Conference, when the mind of the whole Church, ministers and people, can be known. Meantime Bishop Andrew can be fully employed where "his presence and services would be welcome and cordial." The next day was fixed for its consideration, when Bishop Hedding withdrew his name from the paper. He had signed it "because he thought it would be a peace measure, but facts had come to his knowledge since which led him

to believe that such would not be the case." The "facts" were not published until twenty-five years later. Here was the last hope of continued unity. The South supported it to a man, and not a few conservatives of the Middle and Northern Conferences; and all his colleagues stood firmly by it, but Bishop Hedding's unaccountable defection so weakened the measure that a motion to lay it on the table prevailed by a vote of 95 to 84.\* The Conference soon after came to a vote on Finley's substitute, and it was adopted by 111 yeas to 69 nays. Notice was given of a protest by the minority, which, in a few days, was spread upon the Journal; and this was followed by a "statement of the case," or a reply, by the majority.

June 5th, Dr. Longstreet offered what is known as the "Declaration of the Southern Delegates," which was signed by all the delegates (fifty-one) of the slave-holding Conferences, except one from Texas. This paper reads:

The delegates of the Conferences in the slave-holding States take leave to declare to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church that the continued agitation on the subject of slavery and abolition in a portion of the Church, and the frequent action on that subject in the General Conference, and especially the extrajudicial proceedings against Bishop Andrew, which resulted, on Saturday last, in the virtual suspension of him from his office as Superintendent, must produce a state of things in the South which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of this General Conference over these Conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slave-holding States.

The communication was referred to a committee of nine—Robert Paine, Glezen Filmore, Peter Akers, Nathan Bangs, Thomas Crowder, Thomas B. Sargent, William Winans, Leonidas L. Hamline, James Porter.

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\* In the *Methodist Quarterly Review* (April, 1871) Rev. James Porter, a New England delegate, and one of the actors, gives a history of the affair: "The abolitionists regarded this [the proposed council of Bishops] as a most alarming measure. Accordingly, the delegates of the New England Conferences were immediately called together, and after due deliberation unanimously signed a paper declaring in substance that it was their solemn conviction that if Bishop Andrew should be left by the General Conference in the exercise of episcopal functions, it would break up most of the New England Conferences; and that the only way to be holden together would be to secede in a body, and invite Bishop Hedding to preside over them." He could not be seen and informed of this action before the Bishops met; and as the threatening secessionists were afraid (so they say) to call him out of the council—believing that it could be construed and used in a way to defeat their object—he could not be dissuaded from signing the recommendation offered on the following day; but they interviewed him in time to defeat it.

On motion of J. B. McFerrin (of Tennessee), seconded by a member of the Troy Conference—"Resolved, That the committee appointed to take into consideration the communication of the delegates from the Southern Conferences be instructed, provided they cannot in their judgment devise a plan for an amicable adjustment of the difficulties now existing in the Church on the subject of slavery, to devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the Church."

The Plan of Separation, as it is called, was adopted June 5th. Robert Paine, chairman of the select committee of nine having reported it, Dr. Elliot (of Cincinnati) moved its adoption:

He had had the opportunity of examining it, and had done so carefully. He believed it would insure the purposes designed, and would be for the best interests of the Church. It was his firm opinion that this was a proper course for them to pursue, in conformity with the Scriptures and the best analogies they could collect from the ancient Churches, as well as from the best organized modern Churches. All history did not furnish an example of so large a body of Christians remaining in such close and unbroken connection as the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is now found necessary to separate this large body, for it was becoming unwieldy. He referred to the Churches at Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, which, though they continued as one, were at least as distinct as the Methodist Episcopal Church would be if the suggested separation took place. The Church of England was one under the Bishops of Canterbury and York, connected and yet distinct. In his own mind it had been for years perfectly clear that to this conclusion they must eventually come. Were the question that now unhappily agitated the body dead and buried, there would be good reason for passing the resolutions contained in that report. As to their representation in that General Conference, one out of twenty was but a meager representation, and to go on as they had done it would soon be one out of thirty. And the body was now too large to do business advantageously. The measure contemplated was not schism, but separation for their mutual convenience and prosperity.

Dr. Bangs explained the composition of the committee, as formed by three from the South, three from the Middle States, and three from the North. "They were also instructed by a resolution of the Conference how to act in the premises; that if they could not adjust the difficulties amicably they were to provide for separation, if they could do so constitutionally; and after two days of close labor, after minute inspection and revision of every sentence, they had presented their report, from which the Conference would see that they had at least obeyed their instructions, and had met the constitutional difficulty by sending round to the Annual Conferences that portion of the report which required their concurrence."



The preamble and first two resolutions are in these words:

Whereas a declaration has been presented to this General Conference, with the signatures of fifty-one delegates of the body, from thirteen Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and whereas, in the event of a separation, a contingency to which the declaration asks attention as not improbable, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity: therefore,

1. *Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That should the Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the northern boundary of such connection: All the societies, stations, and Conferences, adhering to the Church in the South by a vote of a majority of the members of said societies, stations, and Conferences shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church; and the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in nowise attempt to organize churches or societies within the limits of the Church South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein; it being understood that the ministry of the South reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to stations, societies, and Conferences adhering, by vote of a majority, to the Methodist Episcopal Church; provided, also, that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and Conferences bordering on the line of division, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated.

2. *Resolved*, That ministers, local and traveling, of every grade and office in the Methodist Episcopal Church, may, as they prefer, remain in that Church, or, without blame, attach themselves to the Church, South.

The first resolution was adopted by yeas 135, nays 18; the second by yeas 139, nays 17. It was also provided: "That all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church in meeting-houses, parsonages, colleges, schools, Conference funds, cemeteries, and of every kind, within the limits of the Southern organization shall be forever free from any claim set up on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as this resolution can be of force in the premises."

The turning over to the proper agents of the Church, South (should one be formed), an equitable share of the common property at New York and Cincinnati, and of the Chartered Fund, was arranged for, and a common right to use all copyrights that had been secured before separation. Commissioners were named, and the order and manner of payment planned; and nothing was left undone that could be foreseen for an equitable settlement and an amicable separation.

Apprehending some legal difficulty in dividing the Book Concern property, which is guarded by a Restrictive Rule, it was formally resolved "that we recommend to all the Annual Conferences, at their first approaching sessions, to authorize a change of the sixth Restrictive Article, so that the full clause shall read thus: They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, nor of the Chartered Fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children, *and to such other purposes as may be determined upon by the votes of two-thirds of the members of the General Conference.*" This was adopted, yeas 146, nays 10. The change proposed was to add what is above italicized. This resolution, having thus received a two-thirds majority of the General Conference, was already an enacted change of the Restrictive Article, so soon as concurred in by three-fourths of the voters in the Annual Conferences. The final resolution requested the Bishops to lay this resolution before the Annual Conferences as soon as possible.

Two bishops were to be elected, and the last service of the conservative South to the yet undivided Church was rendered here. The elements that united in the choice of Leonidas L. Hamline will readily occur to the reader; but the Southern delegates brought forward and concentrated on Edmund S. Janes. As one of the secretaries of the American Bible Society he had become known to them, and none could know him without perceiving his great worth and abilities. On the last day of this stormy session the ordination took place, presided over by the senior bishop. The journal says: "Brother Hamline was presented by brothers Pickering and Filmore, and Brother Janes by brothers Pierce and Capers."

The South asked for no new law or interpretation of law; their attitude from beginning to end was: "If Bishop Andrew has broken any law, moral or canonical, let him be put on his defense; bring a charge, specification, proof, and make up a verdict accordingly." But it better suited the majority to treat the case by preamble and resolution.

None were more unprepared for the turn things took in the General Conference of 1844 than the person most concerned. First by bequest, and then by inheritance, he had been connected with slavery for years; and his last connection (by marriage)

was the mildest of all. Possibly, in some parts of New England, he thought, there might be a flutter; but Methodists were used to that. How surprised, then, was he to find the North and the South arrayed over the matter! So great and rapid had been the change in the temper of the times. For peace's sake he was ready to resign; but when he saw himself a representative man, and that his brethren must stand or fall with him, resignation was out of the question, and the final issue was joined on his case.

From the gallery of Green Street Church, the redoubtable Orange Scott looked down upon a strange scene—he saw men valiantly fighting his battles who had once fought him. The few original abolitionists in the Conference kept quiet. They had put the laboring oar into the hands of the so-called conservatives, who were succumbing to the so-called spirit of the age.

The time to work apart had come. The situation was unmanageable, and every year, on account of certain growing secular influences, it was becoming worse. For this a large proportion of the Northern delegates were not to be blamed; they had done what they could, but had failed to keep their section of the Church free from the encroachments of "modern abolitionism." Necessity was upon them. It was a life and death issue, and having a majority they felt they had a right to live. Now, having saved themselves, they were disposed to do all in their power to relieve those who had been driven to the wall, standing on the "Discipline as it is." The Plan of Separation, as conceived and agreed on, was honorable to both parties; it was a healing measure, a fitting farewell to the fifteenth General Conference of united Episcopal Methodism, and the last.







D S DOGGETT

W M M WIGHTMAN

GEO F PIERCE

E M MARVIN

H N MC TYEIRE

## CHAPTER XLIV.

The Louisville Convention—First General Conference—Book Agency—New Hymn-book—Bishops Capers and Paine—Troubles with the Plan in the North—Fraternal Delegate and Business Commissioners—Rejected—Appealing Unto Caesar—Supreme Court Declares the Plan of Separation Valid, and Enforces it—Southern Methodist Publishing House—Separation—Peace—Prosperity.

AT midnight, June 10th, the General Conference adjourned; the next day the Southern delegates met, before leaving for home, and deliberated on what was best to be done. Letters and newspapers received from the South indicated great excitement. To prevent undue haste in action, and to forestall divided counsels, the delegates suggested to their constituents that nothing be done till all the Conferences represented could meet in a general convention, and "submitted" to their "consideration" that May 1, 1845, would be a suitable time, and Louisville, Kentucky, a fit place, for such a convention; and that their delegates—chosen in a certain ratio—be instructed "on the points on which action is contemplated;" the instructions conforming, as far as possible, "to the opinions and wishes of the members of the Church."

They also issued a brief "Address to the Ministers and Members" of their Conferences, conveying authentic information of the provisional Plan of Separation, under which relief in a regular way could be obtained from Northern jurisdiction, if they judged it necessary. "It affords us pleasure," they say, "to state that there were those found among the majority who met this proposition with every manifestation of justice and liberality; and should a similar spirit be exhibited by the Annual Conferences in the North," when an opportunity to manifest justice and liberality is submitted to them by a vote on the Restrictive Article, as provided for in the Plan itself, "there will remain no legal impediment to its peaceful consummation."

They deprecated all excitement, and advised that the question be approached and disposed of with candor and forbearance.

This wise prevision was of great worth. Southern Methodism, though excited within and pressed upon from without, was kept together and found expression of feeling and purpose in regular methods. Not only Quarterly and Annual Conferences spoke out, but stations and circuits met and considered the matter



Says one who took part in these proceedings, and had opportunity of wide observation: "Those who will take the trouble to read the utterances of these Conferences will find that the history of the world does not offer a parallel to the unanimity of sentiment, thought, and purpose, which they exhibited on a subject of so momentous consequence. Their course was taken reluctantly, sadly, but firmly, for the glory of God."\*

May 1, 1845, a convention of delegates from Conferences in the slave-holding States met in Louisville, Kentucky, and continued through twenty days. A Committee on Organization was appointed to canvass the acts of the several Annual Conferences; to consider the propriety and the necessity of a Southern organization, according to the "Plan of Separation;" and also to inquire if any thing had taken place during the year to render it possible to maintain the unity of Methodism under one General Conference jurisdiction, without the ruin of Southern Methodism.

On the 15th of May this committee reported these conclusions: That the General Conference of 1844 gave full and exclusive authority to "the Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States" to decide upon the necessity of organizing a separate ecclesiastical Connection in the South; that sixteen such Conferences were here represented; that it is in evidence that the ministry and membership in the South—nearly five hundred thousand—in the proportion of about ninety-five in the hundred, deem a division of jurisdiction indispensable; that unless this is effected, about a million of slaves, now hearing the gospel from our ministers, will be withdrawn from their care; and that, while thus taking their position, the Southern Conferences are ready and most willing to treat with the Northern division of the Church at any time, in view of adjusting the difficulties of this controversy upon terms and principles that may be satisfactory to both. And then these delegates did solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over the Annual Conferences represented in the convention, by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, entirely dissolved; and that said Annual Conferences "are hereby constituted a separate ecclesiastical Connection," based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "and comprehending the doctrines and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and economical rules and regulations of said

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\*Dr. Myers, on the Disruption of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Discipline, except only in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of the *Methodist Episcopal Church, South.*"

The First General Conference met in Petersburg, May 1, 1846. The body numbered eighty-seven members. On the first day Rev. John Early presided, until the arrival of Bishop Andrew. On the second day the senior Superintendent of American Methodism formally announced his adherence:

PETERSBURG, May 2, 1846.

Reverend and Dear Brethren: I consider your body, as now organized, the consummation of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in conformity to the "Plan of Separation," adopted by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1844. It is therefore in strict agreement with the provisions of that body that you are vested with full power to transact all business appropriate to a Methodist General Conference.

I view this organization as having been commenced in the "Declaration" of the delegates of the Conferences in the slave-holding States, made at New York, in 1844; and as having advanced in its several stages in the "Protest," the "Plan of Separation," the appointment of delegates to the Louisville convention, in the action of that body, in the subsequent action of the Annual Conferences, approving the acts of their delegates at the convention, and in the appointment of delegates to this General Conference.

The organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, being thus completed in the organization of the General Conference with a constitutional president, the time has arrived when it is proper for me to announce my position. Sustaining no relation to one Annual Conference which I did not sustain to every other, and considering the General Conference as the proper judicatory to which my communication should be made, I have declined making this announcement until the present time. And now, acting with strict regard to the Plan of Separation, and under a solemn conviction of duty, I formally declare my adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. And if the Conference receive me in my present relation to the Church, I am ready to serve them according to the best of my ability. In conclusion, I indulge the joyful assurance that although separated from our Northern brethren by a distinct Conference jurisdiction, we shall never cease to treat them as "brethren beloved," and cultivate those principles and affections which constitute the essential unity of the Church of Christ.

JOSHUA SOULE.

On motion of Benjamin M. Drake it was unanimously resolved, by a rising vote, that Bishop Soule be received as one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

At first it was resolved to have a Book Concern in two divisions—one in Richmond and one in Louisville; but this arrangement gave place to another better suited to the times: "That an agent be appointed, whose duty it shall be to provide for the

supply of books, by contracting where they can be obtained by him on the best terms; and that he shall cause such books to be deposited at Louisville, Charleston, and Richmond, subject to the orders of the itinerant preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." John Early was elected Agent, and the editors of the *Christian Advocates* at Charleston, Richmond, and Louisville were made his assistants, and subject to his direction in depository matters. A *Quarterly Review* was ordered to be published at Louisville, Dr. Bascom editor. A constitution for a Church Missionary Society was agreed on, and the Bishops were authorized to enter the foreign field by appointing two missionaries to China.\* E. W. Sehon having declined, Edward Stevenson was elected Missionary Secretary. To Thomas O. Summers was assigned the editorship of the proposed Sunday-school paper, and the principal labor of preparing a revised edition of the Hymn-book. It was ordered that three commissioners be appointed in accordance with the "Plan of Separation," to act in concert with the commissioners appointed for the other Church, "concerning our interest in the Book Concern." By ballot H. B. Bascom, A. L. P. Green, and S. A. Latta were elected such commissioners, and they were instructed to notify the commissioners and Book Agents at New York and Cincinnati of their appointment, and of their readiness to settle; and should no settlement be effected before 1848, said commissioners shall have authority "to attend the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to settle and adjust all questions involving property or funds, which may be pending between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and should the commissioners appointed by this General Conference, after proper effort, fail to effect a settlement as above, then they are authorized to take such measures as may best secure the just and equitable claims of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the property and funds aforesaid."

May 7th, on the second balloting, Dr. William Capers and Dr.

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\*At the next General Conference the Episcopal Address announced the appointment and the arrival out of "the Revs. Charles Taylor, M.D., and Benjamin Jenkins, of the South Carolina Conference, to that empire. On looking over the whole field open to us in that far-off region, it was judged that the city of Shanghai presented the most favorable point at which to commence operations; accordingly, your missionaries were directed to make that their field of labor, till they should be otherwise instructed."



Robert Paine were duly elected bishops, and on May 14 they were ordained by Bishops Soule and Andrew, assisted by Dr. Lovick Pierce and Rev. John Early.

The Conference adjourned May 23, but not without taking this action: "*Resolved*, by a rising and unanimous vote, That Dr. Lovick Pierce be, and is hereby, delegated to visit the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to be held in Pittsburg, May 1, 1848, to tender to that body the Christian regards and fraternal salutations of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

It was suggested by some to expunge or to qualify the old section of the Discipline on slavery, but the Conference was satisfied to reëfirm the deliverances of 1836 and of 1840 as the true and proper exposition of that section. The Pastoral Address congratulates the Church:

The changes in the Discipline, if such they can be called, are as few and unimportant as the fact and circumstance of a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction would permit. No recognized principle of the Methodism of our fathers has been in any way affected by these changes. All the doctrines, duties, and usages—the entire creed and ritual of the Church before the separation, remain without change of any kind. And when we reflect that during no period of its history has Methodism been the result of preëxisting plans and arrangements, but always and everywhere a system of moral agency, within the limits of Scripture authority and precedent, adapting itself, in mere matters of form and modes of operation, to the suggestive force of circumstances and the exigence of the times, it is indeed matter not less of gratitude than surprise that God, in the gracious, and we believe special, providence extended to us, has strangely withheld us from the necessity of greater changes; for they have been fewer in number and less important than those of any General Conference since 1792.

While all was going well in the South, the Northern delegates, on their return, found their constituents divided; some were displeased that the South had been put under the necessity of seeking separation; others, perhaps a larger number, disapproved of the terms of separation agreed on, as too liberal; and both parties, in the end, were offended more or less because the South took advantage of the compact to depart, by departing. When the Conferences acted upon the recommendation to change the sixth Restrictive Rule, a numerical majority, but not three-fourths, voted for concurrence. The result is stated thus: For concurrence, Northern Conferences, 1,164; Southern, 971; total, 2,135. For non-concurrence, 1,070.

It cannot be allowed, for a moment, that these 1,070 were actuated by motives of dishonesty. A few, perhaps, repented them of their coöperation in setting up the Plan of Separation, and lost sight of the man "that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not;" two or three editors, unfortunately occupying influential positions, wrought confusion; the political elements were intensified daily in their opposition to a peaceable adjustment; and the severity with which some of the Southern assemblies reviewed the bearings and doings of Northern Methodism, when declaring in favor of the convention at Louisville, was very irritating. Moreover, the idea got out among some well-meaning but illogical persons that by defeating that article which provided for dividing the Church property, they could defeat the Plan itself, and keep the Church from being divided. At an early day troubles along the border became active: neither side was without fault; and all these things had their influence in shaping opinions out of which grew actions.

The first General Conference of the Northern section of Episcopal Methodism met in Pittsburg, May, 1848. Never was a Church synod made up, and never did one meet, under circumstances less favorable for wise and just deliberations. It was a reactionary body, elected in a revolutionary period. Most of the old members of 1844 were left at home. This General Conference pronounced the division unconstitutional; and because of this, and because of alleged infractions of the compact on the border, and because the change of the Restrictive Rule had not received a three-fourths majority, they formally declared the Plan of Separation "null and void."\*

Dr. Lovick Pierce was early at the Conference, and addressed a respectful note to that body, stating his mission—that he was sent to bear to them the Christian salutations of the Church,

\* It may be gratifying to Methodists of the present generation to know that there were but few who in 1844 voted for the Plan that in 1848 repudiated it. On the rescinding resolution there were 142 votes—132 ayes, 10 nays. Of the voters 41 were at the Conference of 1844; of the 41 there, 11 had voted against the Plan; of the 30 remaining 5 voted against repudiation; leaving but 25 out of the 132 ayes who repudiated their own action of 1844. If it be said that only those of the Conference of 1844 who were pledged to repudiation were reelected in 1848, it speaks well for the majority of 1844; and while it shows that even good men may sometimes mistake policy for principle, it does not make repudiation righteous. (Myers's *Disruption of the Methodist Episcopal Church*.)

South, and to assure them that it sincerely desired that the two great Wesleyan bodies should maintain at all times a warm and confiding fraternal relation to each other; and that he ardently desired that they, on their part, would accept the offer in the same spirit of brotherly love and kindness.

After two days the reply was: "Whereas there are serious questions and difficulties existing between the two bodies, therefore resolved that while we tender to Rev. Dr. Pierce all personal courtesies, and invite him to attend our sessions, this General Conference does not consider it proper at present to enter into fraternal relations with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

Dr. Pierce duly acknowledged the offer of a personal courtesy, but declined it, saying: "Within the bar I can only be known in my official character." And he added: "You will therefore regard this communication as final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. She can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time, either now or hereafter, by the Methodist Episcopal Church. And if ever made upon the basis of the Plan of Separation, as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the Church, South, will cordially entertain the proposition."

The commissioners of the Church, South, reported themselves present "to adjust and settle all matters" pertaining to the division of the Church property and funds. It need hardly be stated how they fared at the hands of a body whose record no candid man, of whatever name or nation, can think on with pleasure.

On a critical occasion St. Paul said, "I appeal unto Cæsar." Nothing else was left Southern Methodists. Suits were brought in the United States Circuit Courts of New York and of Ohio, in 1849, for the *pro rata* property in New York and Cincinnati. In the New York suit, decision was given in favor of the Church, South. The case in Cincinnati went adversely to the Church, South; and it was carried to the Supreme Court of the United States, where, on April 25, 1854, by a full bench of eight justices—Judge McLean, a Methodist, who had already expressed his opinion, declining to sit in the case—the judgment of the Ohio Circuit Court was unanimously reversed, and the Plan of Separation was enforced in all of its provisions and particulars.



By this decision the Church, South, held control of the printing establishments in Richmond, Charleston, and Nashville. To them were transferred the debts due from persons residing within the limits of their Annual Conferences, and in addition \$270,000 was paid their agents in cash, the defendants also paying the costs of the suit.

Southern Methodists were less concerned for the pecuniary outcome of this painful lawsuit than for its judicial and moral vindication before the whole world. Party spirit ran high; offenses increased on both sides; and the presses and leaders of the Church, North, busily represented the Church, South, as a schism, a secession; for the former they assumed the title and claim of "the Mother Church," "the Old Church,"\* while the latter was represented as unauthorized, illegitimate, having no lot nor part in original Methodism. The pleadings before that highest and impartial civil judicatory—the Supreme Court—covered the whole controversy. The journals of the General Conferences of 1844, 1846, and 1848 were before them, and of the Louisville convention of 1845; the Discipline figured largely before Cæsar; and great lawyers, prompted by Smith and Green on the one side, and by Bangs and Peck on the other, made themselves minutely acquainted with the details and genius of Episcopal Methodist government. They had a patient hearing before a bench renowned in jurisprudence, accustomed to construe contracts, and uncommitted; for the only Methodist among them, a native of Vermont and a citizen of Ohio, stood aloof.

The decision of the Supreme Court, after wading through legal preliminaries, strikes the case thus:

In the year 1844, the traveling preachers, in General Conference assembled, for causes which it is not important particularly to refer to, agreed upon a plan for the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church in case the Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States should deem it necessary; and to the erection of two separate and distinct ecclesiastical organizations. . . . In the following year the Southern Annual Conferences met in convention, in pursuance of the Plan of Separation, and determined upon a division, and resolved that the Annual Conferences should be constituted into a separate ecclesiastical connection, based upon

\*A negro exhorter answered this well enough. He was being chaffed by a zealous presbyter for belonging to a "secession Church," and invited to join the "old Methodist Church." Uncle Joe replied: "Ef I take my maul an' wedge an' split open a tree, anybody can tell which is the biggest half, but who can tell which is the oldest half?" It is to be regretted that the elegant and entertaining pages of Dr. Stevens's *History of Methodism*, written as late as 1867, are disfigured, not to say discredited, by the frequent use of such an expression as "the secession of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to be known by the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. . . . The division of the Church, as originally constituted, thus became complete; and from this time two separate and distinct organizations have taken the place of the one previously existing.

But the Church, North, argued that the Southern claimants, belonging now to another ecclesiastical organization, had forfeited all right to the property; the division of the Church was made without proper authority; and however worthy and needy members of the Church, South, might be, they came no longer under the description of persons contemplated as beneficiaries when the fund in dispute was founded, and it would be a perversion to give it to them. The court thus disposes of this argument:

This argument, we apprehend, if it proves any thing, proves too much; for if sound, the necessary consequence is that the beneficiaries connected with the Church, North, as well as South, have forfeited their right to the fund. It can no more be affirmed, either in point of fact or of law, that they are traveling preachers in connection with the Methodist Church as originally constituted, since the division, than of those in connection with the Church, South. Their organization covers but about half of the territory embraced within that of the former Church, and includes within it but a little over two-thirds of the traveling preachers. Their General Conference is not the General Conference of the old Church, nor does it represent the interest, or possess territorially the authority, of the same; nor are they the body under whose care this fund was placed by its founders. It may be admitted that, within the restricted limits, the organization and authority are the same as the former Church; but the same is equally true in respect to the Church, South. If the division under the direction of the General Conference has been made without the proper authority, and for that reason the traveling preachers within the Southern division are wrongfully separated from their connection with the Church, and thereby have lost the character of beneficiaries, those within the Northern division are equally wrongfully separated from that connection, as both have been brought into existence by the same authority.

But we do not agree that this division was made without the proper authority. On the contrary, we entertain no doubt but that the General Conference of 1844 was competent to make it; and that each division of the Church, under the separate organization, is just as legitimate, and can claim as high a sanction, ecclesiastical and temporal, as the Methodist Episcopal Church first founded in the United States. The authority which founded that Church in 1784 has divided it, and established two separate and independent organizations, occupying the place of the old one.

The most humiliating feature in all this affair was the dispute about property. The South voted unanimously for concurrence; the lack of votes was in Northern and Western Conferences. To the deep chagrin of multitudes of right-minded Methodists everywhere, this hitch was made, and the Northern Agents found themselves, as they believed, without authority to settle. It

was an awkward fix of their own procuring: the delay gave rise to bad blood; excuse, however, can be found for it: but impartial history will find it hard to excuse the dominant party for trying to take advantage of their own blunder. Instead of seeking an enabling act to promote an equitable settlement with their Southern brethren, they sought to disfranchise and dishonor them, because the Restrictive Rule had not been changed. The court cut that knot, and found a way to do justice:

It has also been urged, on the part of the defendants, that the division of the Church, according to the Plan of Separation, was made to depend not only upon the determination of the Southern Annual Conferences, but also upon the consent of the Annual Conferences North, as well as South, to a change of the sixth Restrictive Article; and as this was refused, the division which took place was unauthorized. But this is a misapprehension. The change of this Article was not made a condition of the division. That depended alone upon the decision of the Southern Conferences. The division of the Methodist Episcopal Church having thus taken place in pursuance of the proper authority, it carried with it, as matter of law, a division of the common property belonging to the ecclesiastical organization, and especially of the property in this Book Concern, which belonged to the traveling preachers.

It has been argued, however, that according to the Plan of Separation, the division of the property in this Book Concern was made to depend upon the vote of the Annual Conferences to change the sixth Restrictive Article, and that, whatever might be the legal effect of the division of the Church upon the common property otherwise, this stipulation controls it, and prevents a division until the consent is obtained.

We do not so understand the Plan of Separation. It admits the right of the Church, South, to its share of the common property, in case of a separation, and provides for a partition of it among the two divisions, upon just and equitable principles; but regarding the sixth Restrictive Article as a limitation upon the power of the General Conference, as it respected a division of the property in the Book Concern, provision is made to obtain a removal of it. The removal of this limitation is not a condition to the right of the Church, South, to its share of the property, but is a step taken in order to enable the General Conference to complete the partition of the property.

We will simply add that, as a division of the common property followed, as matter of law, a division of the Church organization, nothing short of an agreement or stipulation of the Church, South, to give up their share of it, could preclude the assertion of their right; and it is quite clear no such agreement or stipulation is to be found in the Plan of Separation.

And the judges thus end the matter: "Without pursuing the case any farther our conclusion is, that the complainants, and those they represent, are entitled to their share of the property in this Book Concern; and the proper decree will be entered to carry this decision into effect."



Funds in hand, Southern Methodists at the first opportunity (1854) set up a Publishing House in Nashville. Changes and war have been against it, but it has done an incalculable amount of good in disseminating Christian literature, and shows a sound and prosperous condition in the centenary year. Northern Methodists survived the settlement and, after a brief season of contraction, expanded their Book Concern operations into dimensions that rival the great secular establishments of the country. John Dickins's little Book Room, the contents of which might have been hauled in a cart, has been like the grain of mustard-seed.

Both sections of the Church prospered. In 1846 the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had 455,217 members; in 1860, this number had grown, with proportionate church accommodations, to 749,068. In the same period the Methodist Episcopal Church\* had grown from 644,229 members to 988,523. The per cent. of annual increase was very nearly the same in each.

These are the words of the wise and good Bishop Morris: "If the Plan of Separation had been carried out in good faith and Christian feeling on both sides, it would scarcely have been felt any more than the division of an Annual Conference."

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\* This term is used henceforth not as designating the original Church of that name, for such it is not; but the portion of it not included in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Each, in its sphere, is the "old Church."

## CHAPTER XLV.

California—Conferences on the Pacific Coast—Foreign Missions—China—General Conference of 1850—Bishop Bascom—His Death: Bishops Pierce, Kavanaugh, and Early—Education—The Old Controversy Transferred to the North: How it Ended—Saved by War from Impending Disaster.

THE acquisition of California from Mexico, followed soon by the discovery of gold on the Pacific slope, produced an abnormal movement of population westward; it might be called the American crusades. People poured across the plains, a weary and dusty march of many months; or they took the longer and quicker route by Panama and Chagres, seeking the golden coast. This sudden occupation of California and Oregon led to the survey and more gradual occupation of all the region lying between the Mississippi and the farthest West, from Montana down to Arizona. Here was a field for home missions, and Methodism was expected to keep up with the emigrants. The rude, and often dangerous, circumstances of the missionary perpetuated the heroic spirit of the itinerancy. In February, 1850, Rev. Dr. Boring, of Georgia, superintendent of the mission, accompanied by two assistants, sailed for San Francisco, by way of Panama, well supplied with standard Methodist and Sunday-school publications and with copies of the Bible furnished by the American Bible Society.\* They landed safely and proceeded to work without delay. Their progress exceeded their own expectations. The difficulty they had to encounter lay in the want of men. Circuits were formed and members enrolled and classed; but in the absence of pastors to care for it, much favorably projected work fell through; for nothing stood still in that day. By and by the Churches moved up to this sudden demand, and California was supplied with preachers as well as gold-diggers. In April, 1852, the Pacific Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

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\* A. M. Wynn, of Georgia, and D. W. Pollock, of Missouri: followed (1852) by J. C. Simmons, Blythe, Evans, Davies, Pendergrast, Saunders, Lockley, and Coxé. In 1855 went out Fitzgerald, Fisher, Stewart, Moore, Fulton, Ellis, and others from the Southern States. Many of these, after longer or shorter service, returned; others remained and, with an efficient ministry raised up there, helped to claim that land for Christ. The Hon. and Rev. D. O. Shattuck went out early from Louisiana, and has been eminently serviceable to the cause.

was organized in San Francisco. The year following Bishop Soule presided over the Conference, when five hundred and thirty-seven members were reported, and \$1,200 missionary money was collected.\* The statistics of 1883 show seventy traveling preachers, forty-seven local, four thousand four hundred and eighty white, eight colored, and seven Indian members, with Pacific College located at Santa Rosa.

At a later date the almost limitless territory north of California was organized into the Columbia Conference, including Oregon, and Idaho and Washington Territories, with their college at Corvallis. That eminent field-preacher, Orceneth Fisher, led the way into Oregon, after exercising a powerful and evangelical ministry in the North-west and then in Texas. And later still the Los Angeles Conference was organized, one district of which includes Arizona. The two last are largely missionary fields, and the distances and labors and sacrifices encountered in serving them call to mind the scenes of Church-planting when "the West" lay between the Alleghany Range and the Mississippi River.

When the division took place the Methodism of America had no representative in any foreign field except Liberia and Buenos Ayres. The great masses of heathenism "in the regions beyond" lay untouched, and no effort had been made by Episcopal Methodists to approach them. Both divisions of the Church felt the pressure of the demand about the same time. The Northern branch sent Rev. Messrs. White and Collins, who reached Foo Chow in August, 1847. In September, 1848, Dr. Charles Taylor, of the Southern branch, landed at Shanghai. He was soon joined by Rev. Benjamin Jenkins, who for several years had been connected with the publication of the *Christian Advocate* at Charleston. It was supposed that being a practical printer, and having linguistic talent, he would be serviceable to the projected mission. Shanghai was regarded as the most eligible of all the consular ports in China. It was the emporium of European and American trade with the North of China, the out-port of the central provinces, and port of entry for Tartary. The population of the city was reckoned at over two hundred thousand, and that of the province to which it belonged was esti-

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\* Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by A. W. Wilson, D.D.; 12mo, pages 144: 1882.



ated at thirty-five million. It was within easy reach of Su-chow, the most cultivated city in the province, and in constant communication with a dense population in villages, cities, and country-places, stretching away into the interior.

The missionaries got into quarters, struggled with the difficulties of the language, and in January, 1850, the first public service was held by Dr. Taylor. Into their small chapel the people, as they passed by, were invited to enter and hear the "Jesus doctrine." The first fruit of their labors is reported by Mr. Jenkins, in 1851. The man who served him as teacher applied for Christian baptism about six months after his engagement commenced. He conducted himself with great propriety, and made such progress in Christian knowledge that in January, 1852, he was baptized, together with his wife. Liew, as his name was called, might be taken as a kind of first-fruits, a sample of what is possible among the people who make up a quarter of the human race. His mental force, his moral worth, and his power of speech were reckoned at a high rate; and his death, after useful service as a preacher, was a comfortable, a triumphant demonstration of the power of the gospel to save. None superior to this first convert has since appeared in the native Church.

Reënforcements of able and consecrated men from time to time followed, and though sad inroads were made upon the mission families by the climate, a remnant always remained to hold the ground.\* The returning missionaries largely compensated for their loss abroad by scattering information at home, and keeping alive the public interest. The missionaries planned wisely, for preaching and teaching, for itinerating in the regions accessible, and distributing the printed truth. Their schools—including girls'—were prosecuted with diligence and patience, in which their wives sometimes excelled as teachers.

In 1858 a treaty was concluded between Great Britain and China which fell out to the furtherance of the gospel. It opened the whole empire to missionaries, and guaranteed their protec-

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\* W. G. E. Cunningham, of Holston, sailed from New York in May, and arrived in Shanghai in October, 1852. The following year three were added to the mission—D. C. Kelley, of Tennessee; J. L. Belton, of Alabama; and J. W. Lambuth, of Mississippi. In December, 1859, Young J. Allen, of Georgia, and M. L. Wood, of North Carolina, sailed from New York for Shanghai. All these were accompanied by their families. (See Bishop A. W. Wilson's *History of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.*)

tion; and the United States Government also entered into a treaty which secured to our citizens all the privileges and rights granted to those of any other nation.\* Thus the great obstacle to the propagation of the gospel in China was finally taken out of the way, and henceforth there was nothing to contend with but the evil incident to the heathen conditions of human nature.

The second General Conference met in St. Louis, May, 1850, and continued in session but two weeks, on account of the presence of cholera in the city. One member died, and the sick-list was so large that, in an important election, balloting by proxy was allowed. The report of Dr. Pierce, fraternal delegate, was received and approved; and the three commissioners also gave information of the progress of their business, and were approved. The Joint Board of Finance was recommended by this Conference; subsequently, it became law. It provides that an equal number of traveling preachers and laymen—one from every district—take charge of the money matters of each Annual Conference; make estimates and assessments for the coming year; and distribute funds collected for the relief of superannuated preachers and for widows and orphans.

The *Quarterly Review* was removed to Richmond, and D. S. Doggett appointed editor; E. W. Sehon, Missionary Secretary; John Early was continued Book Agent; and Thomas O. Summers was appointed Book Editor and editor of *Sunday-school Journal*. Henry B. Bascom was elected Bishop, and ordained May 12th.\* The journal says: "The venerable senior superintendent, Bishop Soule, who was brought to the church in great feebleness, took the lead in the laying on of hands, though scarcely able to pronounce the formula."

The career of Henry B. Bascom as preacher and educator and author was brilliant; and as Bishop, brief. He was born in Western New York, 1796.† His mother was of German extraction—the Bidleman family. He says: "I have known few women who possessed a larger share of the poetry of feeling." The son of poor parents, his heritage was toil and privation. His school advantages ended in his twelfth year, and he was boring log-

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\* On first ballot 100 voted. For Henry B. Bascom, 47; J. Boyle, 14; George F. Pierce, 14; John Early, 10; Winans, 8. On second ballot Bascom received 59.

† Within two miles of Chechocton village, on the New York and Erie Railroad. (Henkle's Life of Bascom.)

pumps to make a living and help his parents, at fifteen. He was converted the year before, and walked ten miles to the meeting at which he joined the Church. Still farther westward the family make their home; and while boring logs in Ohio, Bascom held prayer-meetings and began to preach. In 1813 he was admitted into the traveling connection, at Steubenville, mounted on a horse which he had paid for by splitting rails for a neighbor. William McMahon took charge of him on the way to Conference, shared his room with him, loved him always, and thus described him: "Well grown, of fine appearance, very pious, sprightly and intelligent for a lad of his years and limited opportunities."

Hard circuits were his portion and probation for a long time. Tall and well-proportioned, a model of manly dignity and beauty, he could not help looking well, even in coarse apparel; and the brethren thought him proud. He hardly deserved to be praised for magnanimity, since by nature he was incapable of meanness. Henry Clay procured, unknown to him, his election as chaplain to Congress. Though the usual defects of self-education, however thorough, showed themselves in his style, they were as motes in the sunbeam. No pulpit orator in his day had an equal fame. At the General Conference of 1840 he preached, and one who could well appreciate the occasion gave this account:

He preached in the Light Street Church to as dense a throng as could crowd into the spacious building—the adjoining street being filled with people who could not find entrance into the church. His text was, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." The sermon embraced all the cardinal elements of the Christian system, set forth in a light so vivid, under illustrations so overpoweringly magnificent, and with a vehemence so rushing and pauseless as to hold the vast audience spell-bound. At particular passages, several of which we distinctly remember, the effect was awful. The sentences came like the sharp, zigzag lightning; the tones of the preacher's voice were like articulate thunder. The hearer cowered under the weight of thought piled on thought, and was driven almost beside himself by the rapid whirl of dazzling imagery. The sermon, artistically considered, had the strange fault of being too great. It covered too vast a field of thought, it was marred by excess of grandeur. You were bewildered by the quick succession of vivid pictures thrown off, as by the turn of a grand kaleidoscope. The impassioned fervor of the preacher seemed too self-consuming.\*

Bascom was never heard in deliberative assemblies; his stately craft did not affect the chopping seas of debate. But it was a popular error that his superiority lay in speaking only. His ecclesiastical state papers are of the very first rank. He wrote the

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\* Dr. Wightman (editor) in *Southern Christian Advocate*.



Protest; as chairman of the Committee of Thirty, on organization, in the Louisville convention, he was the author of that masterly report; and he wrote other papers in the controversy, which are models of mental grasp and perspicuity and force. Pressed by his necessities, he consented to publish a volume of sermons. Editions amounting to twenty thousand copies were sold. Heavy expenses and a narrow income pressed sorely upon Bascom's spirit all his days; yet he refused the offers, many and tempting, that would turn him away from a simple Methodist preacher's lot. His devotion to his father in sickness and poverty was beautiful. The time that was saved in the vacations of college, and from the eager demands of admiring congregations who often forgot to meet his expenses, was spent in the cabin a few miles from the Ohio, opposite Maysville, ministering to the decrepit parent's infirmities. He cut and hauled wood from the forest to warm the household; and to make himself a wakeful nurse, he slept on a bench, with a block of wood for his pillow. He was with his father at his death, which he described to a friend. Having received the sacrament at his son's hand, "he enjoyed it greatly, thanking God for the precious privilege. 'Now, my son, I am ready to depart and be with Christ. But your mother (step-mother) and the children—will you take care of them?' 'Father,' said I, 'do you doubt it?' 'No, Henry, no; I should not have asked you—I know you will. But one thing more—bury me beside your mother. And do you recollect that she was buried by moonlight, in consequence of a detention at the house?' 'I recollect it well,' said I. 'The moon gives light now, Henry, does it not?' he continued. I answered affirmatively. 'Well then, bury me by moonlight, beside your mother.' On being assured that it should be done as he wished, an ineffable light spread over his countenance, and whispering his farewell to the family, he calmly fell asleep in Jesus." He preached his own ordination sermon, on the "Cross of Christ," and descending from the pulpit took vows from which Heaven soon released him. The first and only Conference he presided over was the St. Louis, which met at Independence, July 10, 1850. The weather was warm; the river was low, and cholera prevailed through its valley. After much detention he reached the Conference on Saturday. For several years he had been reading his sermons, but now, more careful for his example

than his reputation, he threw aside manuscripts, and on Sunday preached in a grove adjoining the city to an immense multitude. "He disappointed us, but most agreeably," reported a hearer. "Without a single note he gave a most clear and plain exposition of the sacred text, adapted to the comprehension of every mind." In the last days of July he returned to St. Louis sick; preached two hours on Sunday, and "greatly exhausted himself." On his way home he reached Louisville August 2, but was unable to proceed to Lexington; and there, in the house of his old and intimate friend, Dr. Stevenson, he died peacefully, September 8th, with this testimony: "All my trust and confidence is in Almighty Goodness, as revealed in the cross of Christ."

The bequest (in 1850) of Rev. Benjamin Wofford, of South Carolina, of \$100,000, for the purpose of "establishing and endowing a college for literary, classical, and scientific education," under the control of the South Carolina Conference, marked an era. It was the largest personal offering that had been made to the Church by any Methodist in America, at that date. The college at Spartanburg, with a well-selected corps of instructors, was opened in 1854, and bears the worthy name of its founder. This munificence was exceeded soon after by Mrs. Eliza Garrett, of Illinois, who founded Garrett Biblical Institute, at Evanston, near Chicago, which was opened in 1855. It was under Dr. Dempster's direction, who had previously put into successful operation the Concord Biblical Institute in the East—the first of its kind in the United States. The English Methodists, since 1834, had been training home, and especially foreign, laborers in "the Wesleyan Theological Institution for the improvement of junior preachers;" and of their centenary offering in 1839 they gave \$137,500 to their two theological institutions—one at Didsbury and the other at Richmond.

The Methodists of Alabama emulated these examples by establishing a college at Auburn, and also by building and endowing the Southern University at Greensboro. The Manual Labor School, at Covington, Georgia, had given rise to Emory College, which rivaled the State University. In South-western Virginia, Emory and Henry College had taken its place among the most useful. Randolph Macon was reaching out after its \$100,000 endowment; Texas rejoiced in the prosperity of Soule College, at Chapel Hill; and Missouri was doing well with

St. Charles and Central Colleges; and Kentucky had made a good beginning at Millersburg. La Grange College had been transferred from the mountain to the railroad town of Florence, where handsome buildings had been prepared for it, under another name, and its halls were full of students. The buildings and outfit of the Louisiana State College at Jackson had passed into the hands of a denomination whose energy and numbers gave to the public satisfactory promise of working it successfully—something the State had failed to do—and under the name of Centenary College, was being well patronized by the Mississippi and Louisiana Conferences. Female schools and colleges, of excellent grade, were so distributed throughout the land that the educational facilities of Methodism from 1840 to 1860 were quite abreast of the age.\*

An interesting question before the General Conference of 1854 at Columbus, Georgia, was the policy and location of the Publishing House. The episcopal college was strengthened by the election of George F. Pierce, John Early, and Hubbard H. Kavanaugh. Having located the Boards and Publishing House in Nashville, the General Conference readily consented to hold its next session there, to see how they fared; and after a session of harmony and healthful interest, the General Conference of 1858, with congratulations and thanksgivings as to the state and outlook of the Church, adjourned, having selected New Orleans as the place of meeting for its successor.

In the northern section of Episcopal Methodism there was a spirit of enlargement and activity. A mission was established

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\*The fate of Augusta was due to a mistake which must often happen when locations are fixed before the lines of travel and the affinities of population are finally determined. The grand old College was left high and dry on the south bank of the Ohio River; for when its patronizing Conferences on both sides ceased to coöperate, it suited neither, and there was no local patronage. Asbury University, at Greencastle, Indiana, and the Ohio Wesleyan, at Delaware, drew away from it in that direction; and the Kentuckians turned to Transylvania, at Lexington. But Augusta College did not die before doing a work, through a quarter of a century, that can never die. Negotiations for making Transylvania University a connectional institution extended from 1840 to 1850; at one time, with promise of success. But the transfer, as accomplished, only embraced one, instead of its three departments—the academic, or Morrison College—and that was found to be mortgaged. As a mere college, it came into competition with others as good. Its nominal connectionalism excused local apathy. Dr. Bascom gave seven years of valuable labor to it, and ten to Augusta.



in India (1856), which though endangered, happily escaped destruction from the Sepoy rebellion; and it has prospered. Attention to the spiritual wants of immigrants from Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, who were crowding into the North and North-west, was rewarded by success at home, and a reflex influence upon the countries from which they came. Episcopal visitations to Liberia were made at such cost and peril that a colored minister of that Conference—Francis Burns—was made missionary bishop in 1856.

One restless, ever-growing trouble afflicted that section of the Church—slavery. Many Methodists in Delaware and Maryland, and a smaller number in Virginia, being on the border, adhered to that side; and until the line became fixed as low down as possible, abolition agitation was suppressed. "The Discipline as it is" was now the rallying cry of the Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Ohio Conferences, and the two former gave their people solemn assurances that they would never submit to any change that looked to making non-slave-holding a term of membership. A well-informed authority says of the decade after the division: "There was a temporary suspension of anti-slavery activity, caused by sympathy with the general solicitude for the peace and harmony of the border. The official papers of the Methodist Episcopal Church were very full and explicit in their assurances, also, that there would be no change in its Discipline on that question." \* In 1852, at the General Conference in Boston, Bishop Hedding having died and Bishop Hamline, a man of feverish eloquence and hypochondriacal humor, having illustrated his own doctrine by resignation, the episcopal bench of the Church, North, was greatly strengthened by the election of Levi Scott, Matthew Simpson, Edward R. Ames, and Osmon C. Baker. The Southern border, began now to be uneasy, and to realize its attitude; four years later it had to contend for toleration, and four years after that, for existence.

While professing to abhor slavery, the Church, North, held on to all the slave-holders who would adhere at first, and sought to take in as many as possible afterward. The organization of an Annual Conference in Kentucky was under consideration at Boston. Heman Bangs, with forcible irony, said: "What do you want to go there for? Have they not Methodist doctrine and Meth-

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\* The Anti-slavery Struggle and Triumph, by Matlack, Chapter XVII.

odist discipline and Methodist institutions already? What do you want to go there for? If it is to get more of these miserable slave-holders into our Church, then I am opposed to it. Haven't we enough of them already?" This brought Mr. Collins, of Baltimore, to his feet. "He could have no fellowship with the cant that had been uttered here about 'these miserable slave-holders.' No; he would bring them in and make them members of our body, and their servants too. It would make them better masters and better servants." Mr. Porter, of New England, was candid enough to say: "Those slave-holders who are in the Church were understood to be there by toleration rather than by right. It was matter of grievance, matter of profound regret, that there was one in the Church, and that our anti-slavery friends were under the necessity every four years of praying us to put a stop to slavery. Is it true that we are trying to tow others in? God forbid!"

Nevertheless, with mission funds, the Conference in Kentucky was created—seventy-seven yeas to sixty-six nays; and subsequently another in Arkansas and in Missouri. In 1856 the Episcopal Address suggested the careful handling of a certain subject, because as a result of their policy "we have six Annual Conferences which are wholly or in part in slave territory."

The old controversy, as transferred to the Church, North, lost none of its earnestness and progressiveness. The signs of advanced action were so strong, before the quadrennial meeting in 1856, that the principal Church paper—the *Christian Advocate* at New York—then edited by one who had misled his friends into an untenable and a false position, used this language: "We did intimate that if the next or any subsequent General Conference should enact a rule of discipline excluding all slave-holders from the Church, whatever be their character or circumstances, it would become the duty of the border Conferences to disregard the rule." The committee of that General Conference did bring in a report recommending a change in the Rule on slavery so as to make non-slave-holding a condition of membership. This required a two-thirds majority to put it on its passage in the Annual Conferences, and a three-fourths vote from them. A shorter route proposed was, to pass a statutory law, by a majority, having the same effect. The eager abolitionists saw no reason why constitutional delays should restrain them from extirpating

slavery, when the sentiment of the age was so overwhelmingly against it. An elaborate speech was made by Dr. Abel Stevens. He insisted that the General Rule allowed slave-holding: "Let it come out then, sir; for the sake of frankness, for the sake of repentance, for the sake of amendment, let it be acknowledged that historically, constitutionally, administratively, we have been a slave-holding, though an anti-slavery, Church." And he warned them against attempting to compass their end by a statutory enactment: "Another division of the Church could not, we all know, be limited to the border. It would strike its desolating fractures, like the rending of an earthquake, through all our solid central strength, to the very North itself. Our denominational history would close, sir, with another such disaster. Fragments of the stately structure might remain, but fragments which would themselves only crumble more and more away." Alfred Griffith and John A. Collins and Henry Slicer warned and entreated that the blow might not fall. Two parties were formed—Northern and Southern anti-slavery; and some of the former took the ground that "no Christian can, by any possibility, either be a slave or a slave-holder, in any proper sense of these words." A delegate from North Ohio said: "Let something be done, some advanced step be taken, or send us not back to our people." The venerable Dr. George Peck assured them that many of their best and wealthiest members in the North sympathized with the border in this conflict with ultraism, and intimated that a split might begin, but would not end, there. He opposed more stringent legislation:

If a hope might be entertained that the ceaseless agitation on the subject of slavery would pause somewhere this side of the total ruin of the work in the slave-holding States, there would be some plausibility in a compromise measure; indeed, almost any change in the law which would not absolutely expel all slave-holders—if its enactment would set the question finally at rest—would be preferable to the irritations of an endless controversy. Our progressive brethren are prepared to take all they can get, but with the frank avowal that they will continue to press on toward the goal of a final separation of all slave-holders from the Church. This is what they purpose to accomplish as soon as they can command the votes; they will only pause upon intermediate points to take breath for a brief period. The present measure, radical as it is, is not a finality; it is not what our reformers ask for and intend to have; agitation will go on, and the war upon our Southern border will continue to be pressed with increasing vigor, until our brethren there shall either be forced out of the Church or compelled to submit to legal enactments which are utterly impossible in the slave-holding States.



The persuasive John P. Durbin wrote and spoke, presenting the example of the primitive Church and the Bible treatment of the subject. He showed very elaborately by numerous quotations from the New Testament, concerning masters and servants, with the expositions of the most learned commentators and scholars in support of the view, "that the apostles admitted slave-holders into the Church." The Indianapolis General Conference was persuaded to forbear taking the shorter route, and to treat the grave subject of a new term of membership more deliberately. In favor of changing the General Rule, there were one hundred and twenty-two votes; against it, ninety-six. As it required a majority of two-thirds to adopt it and put it upon its passage through the Annual Conferences, Bishop Waugh announced the result by saying: "The resolution is not adopted, not having two-thirds of the votes in its favor."

The position of the border Conferences from 1856 to 1860 was very much that of a prisoner awaiting execution. The topics of the day were making the political cauldron boil. After several days' debate in the General Conference at Buffalo (1860), the vote on changing the General Rule was one hundred and thirty-eight yeas to seventy-four nays, which was less, but barely less, than the two-thirds majority. But the grinding new chapter—statutory—was adopted by one hundred and fifty-five yeas to fifty-eight nays. The Baltimore, East Baltimore, and Philadelphia Conferences demanded its repeal, and began to resist.

Modern abolitionism—a combined product of political, social, sectional, and commercial influences, and partaking of a stimulating type of moral sentiment—was now become strong. Instead of putting into the field a candidate to be ridiculed, as was the case twenty years before, it took good advantage of the divided state of the two national parties that had hitherto governed the country, and was bringing forward a man to win the presidential prize—whose election dated a revolution. Nothing but the civil war, which was precipitated upon the country, saved Northern Methodism from an impending disaster.)

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Civil War: Some of its Effects upon the Church, South—Numbers and Strength Diminished—Peace Restored—Address of the Bishops—General Conference of 1866—Resuscitation—Legislation—Flourishing Condition of the Church, North, in the Meantime—Lay Delegation—District Conferences—Constitutional Test—What Became of the Negro Membership of the Church, South—Foreign Missions—Education—General Conferences from 1870 to 1882.

THE war between the States affected, more or less damagingly, all religious interests. In each end of the Union the largest popular element was represented by Methodism, and naturally each section of the Church was in sympathy with its own people. In the Methodist Episcopal Church, the membership from 1860 to 1864 showed a decrease of over sixty-eight thousand. This loss occurred chiefly on the border. But the times were flush with money there, and their financial interests were constantly improving. Their contributions for missions increased over sixty per cent. in these four years.

The Church, South, shared in all the calamities of the long and unequal conflict. The distresses of war were intensified by the impoverishment and confusion which follow invasion and defeat. The actual loss of members—not including colored—slightly exceeded one hundred and thirteen thousand. Hundreds of churches were burned, or dismantled by use as hospitals, warehouses, or stables. College endowments were swept away, and the buildings abandoned. Annual Conferences met irregularly or in fragments; the General Conference (of 1862) was not held; and the whole order of the itinerancy was interrupted. The Church-press was silent, and many of the most liberal supporters of the Church and its institutions were reduced to abject want.

The situation, as revealed after peace was restored, may not be described. Two thousand one hundred and ten battles had been fought, and hundreds of thousands of lives and thousands of millions of property had been destroyed.\* A few figures may serve as an index for Southern Methodism: In 1860 the number of white members (including 5,353 local preachers) was 542,489; in 1866 the number (including 3,829 local preachers) was 429,233. In 1860 the collection in all the Conferences to

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\*Official Reports of Surgeon-general Barnes (3 vols. folio), giving the list of battle-fields.

aid superannuated preachers and widows and orphans was \$67,030; in 1866 for the same class of claimants, more needy than ever, \$35,444. In 1860 there were 2,458 effective traveling preachers, and 266 recruits admitted on trial; in 1866 the number was 2,116, and 114 admitted on trial.\* It was six or seven years before the old figures were touched again, and this marks the period of greatest depression. The Publishing House had been seized by military officers and used for a United States printing-office and other purposes, at a great loss and damage to the property. The missionaries in China had been cut off from all communication with the home Board. The drafts in their hands were honored by the indorsement of the Treasurer of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at New York, and served their uses for a time; but this, of course, was only a temporary relief, leaving a debt.

This debt was hard to meet, and one of the first efforts was directed to it. The lightest sum seemed heavy, but it was a pleasing instance of brotherly kindness, when such acts were rare. The catholic-spirited act of Dr. Thomas Carlton gave an intimation of what many others felt but had not an opportunity of demonstrating. Whatever mitigates the logic of war is a charity to the human race. When this short supply was exhausted the missionaries of the Church, South, were thrown upon their own resources. Dr. Allen found employment in the service of the Chinese Government, in its translation and editorial department, which gave him access to the higher classes, the educated Chinese, and opened to him the opportunity for diffusing Christian thought and truth through native channels. Along with this work he continued the ministry of the word as he was able. He and Dr. Lambuth both supported themselves during those trying years, and carried forward their mission-work until supplies in small amounts began to reach them—at once a relief, and an assurance that the Church had no purpose of abandoning her plans, though not in condition to expand them.

The Indian mission work was brought very low. In 1860 it numbered four thousand one hundred and sixty members, with numerous schools; but when the muster-roll was called six years later only seven hundred and one could be found. Their country had been overrun by marauding troops, and Colonels Che-

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\* Hand-book of Southern Methodism, by P. A. Peterson, D.D.: 1883.



cote, Standwattie, and other chiefs, under the Confederate banner, had led their warriors on the losing side. Tribes and families were dispersed; and starvation must have completed the distresses of war but for the ability of Indians to live at the lowest subsistence-point. It was gravely doubted whether the Indian Conference could ever be reorganized.

Homes had been laid waste, and cattle, mills, and implements of industry destroyed; streams were without bridges and fields without fences. Large districts were on the verge of famine for two or three years after armies had been disbanded. But the most discouraging feature of all was the methods employed in reorganizing the civil governments under cormorant exactors and demagogues, and in the presence of four millions of emancipated slaves with the ballot in their hands. Under these circumstances, with these surroundings, Southern Methodism began its rehabilitation; perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed.

In the summer of 1865 the Bishops met in Columbus, Georgia and, consulting on the situation, issued an address. It was like the blast of a trumpet, and gave no uncertain sound.—The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, yet lived, and in all its polity and principles was unchanged. Neither disintegration nor absorption was for a moment to be thought of, all rumors to the contrary notwithstanding. Whatever banner had fallen or been folded up, that of Southern Methodism was still unfurled; whatever cause had been lost, that of Southern Methodism survived. And the delegates to the General Conference were summoned to meet in New Orleans, April, 1866, according to adjournment eight years before. The peeled and scattered hosts, discouraged and confused by adversities and adverse rumors, rallied; the Annual Conferences were well attended; and never did delegates meet in General Conference from center and remotest posts more enthusiastically; of one hundred and fifty-three elect, one hundred and forty-nine were present.

One of the events of the opening session was a fine-looking delegation of Baltimore Methodists, who had taken the first opportunity of adhering to the Church, South, thus offsetting some losses in Northern Kentucky and East Tennessee. They withdrew from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1861, and maintained an independent existence until their ses-

sion in Alexandria, March, 1866, when this formal union was effected under Bishop Early, and delegates were elected.\*

Men's minds had become used to great changes, and the session at New Orleans was therefore favorable for measures upon which the usual conservatism might have hesitated long in ordinary times. Class-meetings can never be too highly esteemed for the good they do and have done; but one of the acts of 1866 was to recognize the fact that attendance on them ought not to be enforced with greater penalties than attendance upon other means of grace. The rigid limit of six months' probation was abolished. Admission to Church-membership must be guarded with reasonable and conscientious care. Wordly-minded material cannot build up a spiritual house; privileges lightly bestowed are lightly esteemed; and responsibilities incurred without being emphatically understood are already in the way to be neglected, and always to the scandal of pure religion. Pastors are therefore required, when persons offer themselves for membership, to inquire into their spiritual condition, and to obtain satisfactory assurances of their religious experience and their purpose of conformity and consecration, before admitting them. This may be done at once, or it may be a month or a year before the candidate is brought before the congregation to take the vows. The longest term of a pastor's continuous service at one congregation had been two years; it was now fixed at four. At one time a motion was favorably entertained to remove the limit altogether, leaving the appointment annual, but to be repeated at the discretion of the appointing power. This, however, was reconsidered, none objecting more to the extension of discretion than the Bishops. If they, for the good of the whole work, must move the preachers, the law must keep them movable.

District Conferences were discussed and recommended, though not regulated by law until four years later. They came extensively into use throughout the Connection, and by the time the next General Conference took the matter in hand for definitely

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\*This body formed a portion of the original Baltimore Conference which had been divided into Baltimore and East Baltimore. The war changed a large amount of the opposition developed by the (Buffalo) General Conference of 1860; incipient separation was stopped; and the first resolutions taken in that way were rescinded at subsequent sessions. War fused nearly all Northern sentiment into abolitionism. The portion of the Baltimore Conference, represented at New Orleans, numbered 108 traveling and 57 local preachers, and 12,000 members.

shaping it, this institute had shown admirable fitness for serving the Church to edification. This was not that District Conference which obtained from 1820 to 1836—confined to local preachers, and never popular or useful. It was rather a return to the earlier practice, when a Yearly Conference was held by Bishop Asbury in every District. Simple in organization, and bringing together various elements of power within a range wide enough for variety and narrow enough for coöperation; promoting Christian fellowship; taking cognizance of a class of subjects which neither Annual nor Quarterly Conferences can so well handle; and bringing to bear upon given points, for days, the best preaching, where Christian hospitality and love-feasts and sacraments may be enjoyed—the District Conference fell at once into place.

The great measure of 1866 was lay delegation. Its prostrate, almost collapsed, condition required all available help the Church could command. A sentiment in favor of lay coöperation had been growing quietly for years. Once, only two questions were asked in Annual Conference: How many are in Society? Where are the preachers stationed this year? There was no business for laymen then. The schedule grew to embrace a wider range of topics and a larger care. By and by education, Sunday-schools and Sunday observance, religious publications and their dissemination, orphanage and widowhood, temperance, and Church extension, began to occupy much time in Annual and General Conferences, and the need of laymen was felt.

The original motion was in the form of two resolutions, simple and general, not embarrassed by particulars. The first was: "*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Conference that lay representation be introduced into the Annual and the General Conferences." This was adopted by ninety-six yeas, forty-nine nays. The principle once admitted, even by a numerical majority, every thing was gained. Men who were doubtful, or so indifferent to the new measure as to vote on the old side, saw that the Church could not well stand in that attitude on such a subject—excluding laymen on a minority expression of the ministry; and enough of them consented to waive their preferences on the final record to make a two-thirds majority.

A special committee, called for by the second resolution, took the matter in hand, with instructions to arrange the details of a plan; which was adopted, ninety-seven yeas, forty-one nays.

The measure having passed on to the Annual Conferences, obtained the requisite three-fourths vote, and laymen took their seats in the General Conference of 1870.

Considering the Annual Conference as mainly an executive body, the presence of only four lay delegates from each district is provided for there; but in the General Conference, the law-making body, the number of lay delegates is equal to the clerical. So ripe was public opinion, and so propitious the times, and so well digested the scheme, that this great change was introduced without heat or partisanship. Unstintedly, voluntarily, on their own motion, the ministry, who had held this power from the beginning, divided it equally with lay brethren. Their appearance in the chief council of the Church, and their influence, justified their introduction, even to those who had feared; a new power was developed, a new interest awakened, a new progress begun. At least two tentative schemes preceded this consummation. In the Virginia Conference the Joint Board of Finance had been in use before it was taken into consideration and recommended by the General Conference of 1850.\* In 1854 the Louisiana Conference began to practice lay coöperation on a larger scale, and its financial and spiritual conditions were soon the better for it. A number of laymen from each district were invited to meet with the Conference. The subjects usually referred to committees—as books and periodicals, missions, church and parsonage building, education, ministerial support, Sunday-schools—were considered on afternoons in committee of the whole, where these laymen spoke and voted; and the reported conclusion was formally adopted by the legal Conference. This plan came into use in the Mississippi Conference, and perhaps others, with advantage.

Bishops Soule, Andrew, and Early, aged and feeble, were, at their request, retired upon the superannuated list; and four bishops were elected and ordained—William M. Wightman, Enoch M. Marvin, David S. Doggett, and Holland N. McTyeire.

The Publishing House and Missionary Society wrecks were patched up, and sent forth desperately, to sink or swim. There was no capital, and but little credit; no supply, but much demand. The weekly *Christian Advocates*, one by one, got into position; the colleges and schools reopened under miscellaneous

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\* It is credited to the fertile mind of Dr. William A. Smith.



classification; the *débris* of cities and farms was cleared away, and new structures gradually rose; the earth was fruitful and responded to labor; the energies of a people, whose spirit was not broken but rather invigorated by adversity, grappled with the strange situation; the rapacious adventurers who had settled down like a nightmare upon State and county and municipal governments were thrown off; the new instauration disclosed its advantages and compensations; things mended and times grew better. The itinerant went forth again on his gracious errands; old circuit lines were restored and enlarged; new and larger churches were built, and better parsonages; and by the blessing of the Lord the Church survived and grew. † The white membership was less in number than twelve years before, but it was doubled in fifteen years, with a corresponding improvement in Church property and accommodations and ministerial support.\*

In 1866 were reported 78,742 of the colored membership that had numbered 207,766. The two African Churches, hitherto operating mainly in the North, appropriated a large share of them; another portion went to Northern Methodism, which had also come down to divide the spoils. To the latter went many of the preachers and exhorters, who made the most efficient agents for extending their new organization in the Southern field; and some of them have more than once figured creditably in their General Conferences. † The remnant that clung to the Church which min-

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\* In 1850 (according to United States census tables) the value represented by church-buildings and parsonages in the Church, South, was \$3,771,502. In 1883 it was \$13,323,592—an increase of 253 per cent. In 1857 the Church, North, had \$17,908,184 in church-buildings and parsonages. In 1883 the amount was \$79,238,085, an increase in twenty-six years of 342 per cent. In comparing the increase of Church property North and South, the comparative wealth of the two sections will be seen by the following figures: In 1850 the taxable property (slaves not included) of the thirteen Southern States occupied by the Church, South, was \$2,480,000,000. In 1880 the taxable property in these States was \$2,370,000,000. Showing a clear loss of real and personal estate in thirty years of \$110,000,000. In 1850 the Northern States owned (including Maryland and Delaware, where Southern Methodism had no members) \$3,473,000,000. In 1880 these States owned \$14,403,000,000. Gain in the thirty years, \$10,930,000,000. Showing a gain of 314 per cent. in thirty years. Thus it appears that the gain of 342 per cent. in Church property by the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) was based upon a general property increase of 314 per cent. in thirty years. On the other hand, the gain of 253 per cent. in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was made in the face of an actual decrease of general property amounting to \$110,000,000. (Dr. W. P. Harrison's Centenary Year Tables.)

istered to them in slavery were set off into circuits, districts, and Annual Conferences; and at their request were constituted an independent body under the name chosen by themselves — “The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America.” The Discipline of the parent body was adopted, without material alterations, and two bishops, of their own election, were ordained.\* The General Conference, which authorized this proceeding, also ordered that all Church property that had been acquired, held, and used for Methodist negroes in the past be turned over to them by Quarterly Conferences and trustees.

Now was seen the fruit of a hundred years of Christian labor and influence bestowed upon the servile population. There were no St. Domingo scenes. Incitements and opportunities were not wanting, and in many counties and in whole States negroes were in the numerical majority; but there was no riot or massacre, no wholesale pillage or insurrection. When left to themselves the ex-slaves settled down into kind relations with their late masters and their families, and often continued in their employment under the new relation. A religious sentiment pervaded and dominated the emancipated race, and the chief annoyance white communities pretended to suffer was from endless preachings and protracted meetings. That such a suddenly enforced and universal emancipation did not end in bloody calamity to both races is due mainly to Christian work persistently pursued by Methodists, and also by Baptists, and not wholly neglected by other Churches in the South. The average statesman, and politician, and historian, is slow to see this great fact, and to acknowledge its salutary force in the problem of civil life.

One compensation of a divided family appeared—when the Church, South, was very poor, the Northern section was enriched and increased in goods. In 1864 their Church Extension Society was established in Philadelphia, through which nearly two millions of dollars have been gathered and disbursed; the limit of the pastoral term was changed from two to three years; three bishops were elected;† all the Southland was mapped out for occupation; and the motion to change the General Rule so as

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\* This was done in Jackson, Tennessee, December, 1870. W. H. Miles and R. H. Vanderhorst were ordained by Bishops Paine and McTycire, who presided at the Conventional General Conference.

† Davis W. Clark, Edward Thompson, and Calvin Kingsley.

to make slave-holding a bar to membership obtained a two-thirds majority—207 ayes, 9 nays—and this constitutional amendment was put on its passage through the Annual Conferences, which in due time returned a very decided three-fourths vote.\*

Under the leadership of that great chief of the Bureau—Dr. Durbin—foreign fields had been occupied and Conferences organized in China, and India, and the North of Europe, and their Bishops were engaged in tours of missionary visitations round the world, at a time when the Southern Bishops were shut up by embargo. They were celebrating the Embury Chapel† Centenary (1866) with gifts and offerings that did honor to universal Methodism, while their less fortunate brethren were gathering up the fragments and making a new start. Over eight millions of dollars were contributed among them for various purposes. Drew Seminary, the gift of a generous layman, dates from that year. The wealthy sons and friends of Wesleyan University raised its endowment to a sum that would have seemed fabulous in the early Asburyan age; and all these personal gifts were soon exceeded by the plain, economical, pious, Isaac Rich, of Boston, who left more than a million of dollars for the Methodist university founded by him.)

The officials of Northern Methodism, by right of influence exerted and services rendered, enjoyed favor with the Federal Government, and this was of great advantage to them in pushing their

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\* The President's Emancipation Proclamation (Jan. 1, 1863) anticipated the action of the Church by about two years.

† We have seen Northern Methodism a slave-holding Church to the end of the institution. A curious scrap of history shows a very early connection with it. J. B. Wakely, D.D., of the New York Conference, in "Lost Chapters recovered from the Early History of American Methodism," opens the original book of official records of Philip Embury's Chapel. Peter Williams began in 1778 to be sexton for John Street Church, and was a convert of Captain Webb's in the Rigging Loft. Peter was a black slave, the property of one Aymer, an Englishman. Aymer being a loyalist left the country, and the trustees of the "Cradle of American Methodism" bought Peter. This is the record on the "old book:"

"June 10, 1783—Paid Mr. Aymer for his negro Peter, £40."

Peter became free afterward by self-redemption. The first credit on the "old book" in his favor is for his watch, valued at £5. Then there are various credits of less amounts, until the last is made—"Nov. 4, 1785—By cash received of Peter Williams, in full of all demands, £5. 7. 0." The bill of sale is very business-like; but it does not appear that Peter got his free-papers until Oct. 20, 1796. (See *Lost Chapters*, pages 450 to 467.)

lines southward and westward. Bishop Kavanaugh was able, during the war, to visit the Pacific Coast. He was arrested at a camp-meeting near Stockton, and carried before the commander of the post at San Francisco, as a dangerous person; but on searching his papers nothing worse was found than lists of quarterly-meetings. Southern Methodists endured more than ordinary misfortunes. One thing, however, they did not look for, and it made a deep wound. After the Federal forces had occupied large sections of Southern territory, Bishop Ames, with preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, followed the victorious army with an order procured from Secretary of War Stanton, and took forcible possession of Southern Methodist pulpits, even to the exclusion of ministers appointed by the Church authorities and desired by the congregation.\* These violent pastors held on after the war ceased, and had to be ousted, ungracefully and reluctantly. The intruder placed in Carondelet Street Church, by Bishop Ames's order, was got out barely in time for the meeting of the General Conference at New Orleans.

The Church, North, adopted lay delegation, admitting two laymen from the larger Conferences into the General Conference, but none into the Annual; also a plan of District Conferences. At the Brooklyn session (1872) lay delegates took their seats, and the unprecedented number of eight bishops was elected.†

Decided improvement in jurisprudence was made at the New Orleans session. For the last time was witnessed the tedious and

\* HEAD-QUARTERS, DEP'T OF THE GULF, New Orleans, Jan. 18, 1864.  
*Special Orders, No. 15.*

In accordance with instructions contained in a letter from the Secretary of War, under date of November 30, 1863, all houses of worship within this Department, belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in which a loyal minister, who has been appointed by a loyal Bishop of the said Church does not now officiate, are hereby placed at the disposal of the Reverend Bishop Ames. Commanding officers at the various points where such houses of worship may be located are directed to extend to the ministers that may be appointed by Bishop Ames, to conduct divine service in said houses of worship, all the aid, countenance, and support practicable, in the execution of their mission. Officers of the Quartermasters' Departments are authorized and directed to furnish Bishop Ames and his clerk with transportation and subsistence, when it can be done without prejudice to the service; and all officers will afford them courtesy, assistance, and protection. By command of Major-general Banks.

† Thomas Bowman, W. L. Harris, R. S. Foster, I. W. Wiley, S. M. Merrill, E. G. Andrews, Gilbert Haven, and J. T. Peck.



unsatisfactory trial of an appeal in open Conference. Such business is now relegated to judicious committees, both in Annual and General Conferences, much to the advantage of justice and decency. It was reserved for the next session (Memphis, 1870)—in which laymen first sat—to complete a measure which had been attempted and failed twice or thrice, half a century before, and without which legislation is never secure. The General Conference is restrained by certain constitutional limitations, called Restrictive Rules. When and how may it be determined that any one of those limitations has been violated? If the legislature is the judge of these limitations to its own power, then virtually there are no limitations. With great unanimity this point was now settled which had been overlooked in 1808.\* At this Conference John C. Keener was elected and ordained bishop, the first to enjoy the distinction of being chosen by representatives of the two classes he serves—preachers and people.†

In 1871 Bishop Marvin, presiding at the West Texas Conference, ordained, and appointed to the Rio Grande, Alejo Hernandez, a native of Mexico, an ex-soldier against Maximilian, and a convert, not from Romanism, but from the infidelity to which a reaction from Romanism often leads. He proved a chosen vessel, and began the evangelizing work which has been developed into the Mexican Border Mission, extending from Corpus Christi to El Paso, along the Rio Grande Valley, and including, irregularly, the territory on both sides for about a hundred miles. In that peculiar population lying along the United States and the Mexican frontier, and subject to strange vicissitudes of revolution, a native ministry has been raised up, churches have been gathered, circuits and districts formed. An American was found well adapted and willingly devoted to this hard border labor—a son of one of that small band who, in 1840, received appointments in the Republic of Texas.‡ By God's blessing upon his faithful workmen, that wilderness may one day blossom as the rose. If this border movement be carried forward into Mexico, and make progress into the interior, it will become possible to unite the Central Mexican with the Mexican Border, and organize one Conference to cover all the Mexican work.

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\* See foot-note on page 569, and on page 513. † Third ballot, 184 votes—J. C. Keener, 96; J. A. Duncan, 84.

‡ A. H. Sutherland, first superintendent. Hernandez, after being transferred to the Central Mexican Mission, and making full proof of his ministry, died in 1875.

The changes in the civil conditions of Mexico—its freedom from the domination of Romanism, and its concession of liberty of conscience and worship to all its citizens—stirred Bishop Keener to inaugurate a mission there. Procuring contributions and promises of support sufficient to justify the movement, he visited the City of Mexico early in the year 1873 and, purchasing property for the church, appointed Hernandez to make a beginning. A year afterward he repeated his visit, taking more laborers, and found Protestantism making headway. Native helpers came forward, and by March, 1877, there were seventy members, a full congregation, and the Sabbath and day schools were kept up with a good attendance. Next year a superintendent entered upon this work who organized at once a system of evangelistic operations, reaching to all accessible points in the States adjacent to the City of Mexico.\* The press was brought into requisition, and the *Evangelista Mexicano* issued. There were reported at the close of his first year two hundred and sixty-eight members, twelve native preachers, and eight teachers. Generous donations have been made by individuals and societies, and considerable Church property has been accumulated in the Republic. Reënforcements of men and means continue to go in that direction, and the not distant future may see a continuous territory occupied by the Church, South, from the western border of Texas. The Northern branch of Methodism has entered the same field with accustomed zeal and energy.

The *reconnaissance* of Brazil in 1835 was first followed up for permanent occupation in 1876.† Many and great changes had taken place in forty years. The intolerant despotism of the Romish Church, in Brazil, as in Mexico, had brought on a conflict with the government. The Emperor was an enlightened and cultivated man, and the higher classes and legislative bodies had shaken themselves loose from the grasp of the priesthood, and thrown the empire open to educational and religious enterprise. Rio de Janeiro, the capital and commercial emporium of the empire, was made the basis of operations. The popular drift was

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\* W. M. Patterson, D.D., from the Memphis Conference.

† John J. Ransom, of the Tennessee Conference. He arrived February 2d. J. E. Newman, an elder of the Alabama Conference, settled in the Province of San Paulo soon after the war; opened his mission to English-speaking people; organized a Church at Santa Barbara; and was recognized by the Board as a missionary in May, 1875.

toward infidelity, and the general tone was that of indifference to religion. A small native society was gathered, and a larger number of English-speaking residents. A church has been built and a school enterprised. Piracicaba has also been selected as a center of operations for preaching and for religious education.

The improved condition of the Church and country in 1870, and the wants of both, called for the office of General Sunday-school Secretary, to whom was committed the superintendence of the entire department of Sunday-school literature.\* This department of publications soon became the most popular, and lucrative to the Publishing House. In 1882 a Church Extension Society was organized, whose aid was timely for the openings in the great South-west.†

One of the first things attempted in the new era, and the last achieved by the Church, South, was the restoration of its literary institutions.‡ Some were never reöpened.¶ Here money was inexorably required—zeal, industry, patriotism, and patience, could not attain unto it. The higher education costs more than the average student can pay; it must rest on endowment. Six or seven Conferences, covering a wide reach of territory and population, undertook, in 1872, to found a university such as would meet the wants of the Church and the country. A convention, composed of delegates from Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas, adopted a plan for such an institution, and it was determined to take no steps toward selecting a site, or opening any department of the institution, until the sum of \$500,000 should be obtained in valid subscriptions. Of institutions of lower grade than that contemplated it was believed there was already a supply. The effort to raise funds demonstrated the impossibility of the enterprise. In the judgment of its best friends the scheme was considered a failure, when Cornelius Vanderbilt, a citizen of New York, made a donation of \$500,000, which he afterward in-

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\* A. G. Haygood, D.D., was elected to this position, which he filled until December, 1875, when he resigned, and was succeeded by W. G. E. Cunnynggham, D.D.

† D. Morton, D.D., Secretary, has made an excellent showing for the first year's operations of this new arm of the service, domiciled at Louisville.

‡ Trinity College, North Carolina, and the South-western University, Georgetown, Texas, with a strong combination of patronizing Conferences, belong to the new era. The first succeeded Normal, the second superseded Soule College.



creased to \$1,000,000; and subsequently his son, William H. Vanderbilt, made a donation of \$250,000, to provide a further outfit, and to increase the permanent endowment to \$700,000. In West Nashville the senior Superintendent, Bishop Paine, on his way to the General Conference of 1874, attended by numerous delegates, laid the corner-stone; and with full faculties, a university of six departments, including theology, was formally opened in October, 1875. The Founder concluded his final communication to the President of the Board of Trust, expressing approval of the organization of the university, with these words: "And if it shall, through its influence contribute, even in the smallest degree, to strengthen the ties which should exist between all geographical sections of our common country, I shall feel that it has accomplished one of the objects that led me to take an interest in it."\* Several years later George I. Seney, of New York, by a donation of \$260,000 to Emory College and Wesleyan Female College,† Georgia, greatly enlarged, beautified, and strengthened those institutions. Education prospered greatly in the other branch of Episcopal Methodism, and they often had occasion, both on account of the inroads of death and because their work was enlarging, to bring forward new men and strong, to posts of responsibility.‡

The General Conference, with gratitude for the signs of prosperity on every side, met in Nashville, 1882. The Head of the Church had blessed their labors, more than restored all their losses, and given them peace. Alpheus Wilson, Linus Parker, Atticus G. Haygood,§ John C. Granbery, and Robert K. Hargrove, were elected bishops. The ordination sermon was preached by Bishop Kavanaugh, who, in less than two years, received the

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\* "Commodore" Vanderbilt was not a member of the Church, but his mother was a Moravian, of Staten Island, whose memory he revered; and his wife (by second marriage) a Methodist, of Mobile. Consulting with one of the Southern Bishops, through whom he made his donation, he said—referring to the Lennox Library, then going up: "It is the style, when a man builds a college or library, to put it down here, where there are plenty. I will put this where it is needed."

† This institution is believed to be the oldest in the United States, perhaps in the world, established upon the plan of a regular college, with authority to confer degrees upon women. Mr. Seney, its benefactor, is a Methodist, and the son of an itinerant of the old panel.

‡ In 1880 H. W. Warren, C. D. Foes, J. F. Hurst, and E. O. Haven, were elected bishops. In 1884, Drs. Ninde, Walden, Fowler, and Mallalien. § Declined.



summons to enter the joy of his Lord, while in the pulpit, in his eighty-second year. Bishop Paine conducted his last public service in laying hands upon his younger brethren, and committing to them a charge which he, for thirty-six years, had fulfilled with spotless fidelity and the most eminent ability.

(Since 1878 a new power has entered the field; it was then recognized—the Woman's Missionary Society.) Moved by the reports of the success of women as Bible-readers in heathen lands, and as helpers in domestic missions, the godly women of Southern Methodism, upon the first opportunity, undertook this errand of mercy in various cities, beginning at Baltimore; and at Atlanta they were ready for combination and coöperation. Efficiently have they planned and acted, so that both impulse and breadth have been given to operations in China, in Brazil, and on the Mexican Border. Working in agreement with the Board of Missions, they yet keep up a separate management, which is stimulating the spirit and enlarging the field of missions.

Bishop Marvin (1876-7) visited China, strengthened the hands of the missionaries, and bore a testimony concerning the field that caused a quickened interest throughout the Church, and a steady increase of its forces. He ordained native preachers, and returned after a year's absence; but he was not permitted to make his report to the ensuing General Conference. Before his lamented death, however, he had published an account of his tour, which still speaks to the churches.

(The busy laborers disappear from the scene. "God buries his workmen, but carries on his work.") Capers, the Chrysostom of Methodism, has long since fallen on sleep; and Soule and Andrew and Early—whose sixty years of labor in his native Virginia associated him closely with all its material and spiritual development. The Church has mourned more recently for the eloquent and useful Wightman and Doggett. Lovick Pierce, in his ninety-fifth year, died; but so pervasive was the influence of that pure and powerful life, he seems yet to live.



R. K. HARGROVE

L. PARKER

J. C. KEENER

J. C. GRANBERRY

A. W. WILSON



## CHAPTER XLVII.

The Era of Fraternity: Correspondence Anent it—Deputations—Delegates—Joint Commission at Cape May—Status and Basis Definitely Declared—Property Claims Adjusted—Ecumenical Conference—City Road Chapel—London Methodists—Centenary Celebration at Baltimore—From 1784 to 1884.

THE last letter John Wesley wrote to America was to Ezekiel Cooper, and contained these words: "Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue."

The grand *depositum* of Wesleyan doctrine is common to them all, under whatever name or in whatever region they proclaim it; the same enemies oppose, and the same standards are appealed to; the same historical names and facts are cherished by them all. Whatever differences may exist between the various branches of this ecclesiastical family, they are nearer to each other than they can be to other people. "I am a Methodist" awakes strong sympathies and affinities, and is associated with a fellowship, doctrines, experience, usages, means of grace, peculiar to this form of Christianity, and dear to every one who has enjoyed them. Notwithstanding occasional personal offenses against the unity of the Spirit, and improper associate acts and utterances, many waters cannot quench the love of the Spirit.

Efforts at formal fraternal relations were broken off at the reactionary General Conference of 1848. There the messenger of peace from the South, being rejected, left the proposition:

You will therefore regard this communication as final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. She can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time, either now or hereafter, by the Methodist Episcopal Church; and if ever made upon the basis of the Plan of Separation, as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the Church, South, will cordially entertain the proposition.

And there it rested for over twenty years. In May, 1869, the Southern Bishops, at their annual meeting in St. Louis, were waited upon by a deputation, consisting of Bishops Janes and Simpson, conveying a communication. These distinguished brethren brought, officially, a letter of recent date from their



colleagues, saying: "It seems to us that as the division of those Churches of our country which are of like faith and order has been productive of evil, so the reunion of them would be productive of good. As the main cause of the separation has been removed, so has the chief obstacle to the restoration. . . . We are aware that there are difficulties in the way, growing out of the controversies of the past and the tempers of the present. We have, therefore, deputed our colleagues to confer with you, alike as to the propriety, practicability, and methods of reunion." They also reported their declaration made and published in Erie, Pa., June, 1865: "That the great cause which led to the separation from us of both the Wesleyan Methodists of this country and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has passed away, and we trust the day is not far distant when there shall be but one organization, which shall embrace the whole Methodist family in the United States." This declaration, they added, was referred to in the Quadrennial Address to their late General Conference, "and no exception was taken to it by that body."

The interview was a pleasant one, but brief, and the deputation as suddenly left the city as it came. The College of Bishops had now an offer of reunion on their hands, and no questions or explanations with the other party possible. To indicate a prompt refusal, or that the proposition was under consideration, would be alike hurtful—the public mind was so ready for misconception on that subject. They replied at sufficient length to be understood. A generation had grown up ignorant of the question at issue; and here was an opportunity to get a good hearing of the matter, both in the Northern and Southern papers. They therefore courteously reminded the brethren that fraternal feelings and relations must, in the nature of the case, be established before any question of reunion can be entertained. "Heart divisions must be cured before corporate division can be healed;" and referring to the well-known failure of their delegate:

You could not expect us to say less than this—that the words of our rejected delegate have been ever since, and still are, our words. It may help to the more speedy and certain attainment of the ends we both desire, to keep distinctly in mind our mutual positions, and to hold the facts involved in our common history in a clear light. You say "that the great cause which led to the separation from us of both the Wesleyan Methodists of this country and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has passed away." If we understand your reference, we so far differ from you in this opinion that it may help any negotiations hereafter taking

place to restate our position. Slavery was not, in any proper sense, the cause, but the occasion only, of that separation, the necessity of which we regretted as much as you. But certain principles were developed in relation to the political aspects of that question, involving the right of ecclesiastical bodies to handle and determine matters lying outside of their proper jurisdiction, which we could not accept; and in a case arising, certain constructions of the constitutional powers and prerogatives of the General Conference were assumed and acted on, which we considered oppressive and destructive of the rights of the numerical minority represented in that highest judicatory of the Church. That which you are pleased to call—no doubt sincerely thinking it so—"the great cause" of separation existed in the Church from its organization, and yet for sixty years there was no separation. But when those theories, incidentally evolved in connection with it, began to be put into practice, then the separation came.

We cannot think you mean to offend us when you speak of our having separated from you, and put us in the same category with a small body of schismatics who were always an acknowledged secession. Allow us, in all kindness, brethren, to remind you, and to keep the important fact of history prominent, that we separated from you in no sense in which you did not separate from us. The separation was by compact and mutual; and nearer approaches to each other can be conducted, with hope of a successful issue, only on this basis.

They respectfully disclaimed authority or disposition to say any thing on the "propriety, practicability, and methods of reunion."

This correspondence was spread before both Churches, and did good. It was something for brethren estranged to meet, and to speak candidly. Several local and individual fraternity movements were tried without success. The Baltimore Conference (South) being in session, March, 1870, the Baltimore Conference (North) appointed two fraternal delegates to it; men personally most estimable and beloved. But the Conference declined to receive them in their official character, and rejected the overture, on the principle that the General and not the Annual Conferences of the two Connections have the right and power properly to institute fraternal relations.

Bishop Janes and Rev. Dr. W. L. Harris appeared before the General Conference at Memphis, in 1870, with credentials from a commission created by the Northern General Conference of 1868, "to treat with a similar commission from any other Methodist Church on the subject of union." They were heard, and their communication referred to a select committee, which reported "that the distinguished commission now present" were appointed and empowered, according to the journal of their General Conference, "to treat with similar commissions" from those Methodist Churches that "desired union" with the Church,

North; and therefore the commission could not, "without great violence in construing language," be regarded as accredited to the Church, South; and "that if they were fully clothed with authority to treat with us for union, it is the judgment of this Conference that the true interests of the Church of Christ require and demand the maintenance of our separate and distinct organization;" and "that we tender to the members of the commission our high regards as brethren beloved in the Lord, and express our desire that the day may soon come when proper Christian sentiments and fraternal relations between the two great branches of Northern and Southern Methodism shall be permanently established."

The report of this committee was adopted unanimously, including this declaration: "That the action of our Bishops, in response to the message from the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has the full indorsement of this General Conference, and accurately defines our position in reference to any overtures which may proceed from that Church, having in them an official and proper recognition of this body."

At the General Conference of 1874, convened in Louisville, three fraternal delegates appeared, duly commissioned from the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.\* After mutual introductions to those on the platform, their credentials were read. The President then introduced them to the Conference, and they delivered addresses, of which the journal says they "were characterized by excellent taste, and warm, fraternal sentiments, which were well received by the Conference and the immense audience in attendance." The delegates were treated most hospitably while they remained, and on their taking leave appropriate resolutions were adopted. Considering the whole matter of fraternity as brought before them in the credentials and the addresses of the delegates,† the General Conference said:

\* Albert S. Hunt, D.D., Charles H. Fowler, D.D., and General Clinton B. Fisk.

† The action of the General Conference in Brooklyn (1872) was partially incorporated in the certificate of the delegates, in the following terms: "To place ourselves in the truly fraternal relations toward our Southern brethren which the sentiments of our people demand, and to prepare the way for the opening of formal fraternity with them, it is hereby resolved that this General Conference will appoint a delegation, consisting of two ministers and one layman, to convey our fraternal greetings to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its next ensuing session."



Measures preparatory to formal fraternity would be defective that leave out of view questions in dispute between the Methodist Episcopal Church and ourselves. These questions relate to the course pursued by some of their accredited agents whilst prosecuting their work in the South, and to property which has been taken and held by them to this day against our protest and remonstrance. Although feeling ourselves sorely aggrieved in these things, we stand ready to meet our brethren of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the spirit of Christian candor, and to compose all differences upon the principles of justice and equity.

It is to be regretted that the honored representatives who bore fraternal greetings to us were not empowered also to enter upon a settlement of these vexed questions. We are prepared to take advanced steps in this direction, and, waiving any considerations which might justify a greater reserve, we will not only appoint a delegation to return the greetings so gracefully conveyed to us from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but we will also provide for a commission to meet a similar commission from that Church for the purpose of settling disturbing questions. Open and righteous treatment of all cases of complaint will furnish the only solid ground upon which we can meet. Relations of amity are, with special emphasis, demanded between bodies so near akin. We be brethren. To the realization of this the families of Methodism are called by the movements of the times. The attractive power of the cross is working mightily. The Christian elements in the world are all astir in their search for each other. Christian hearts are crying to each other across vast spaces, and longing for fellowship. The heart of Southern Methodism being in full accord with these sentiments:

*Resolved*, That this General Conference has received with pleasure the fraternal greetings of the Methodist Episcopal Church, conveyed to us by their delegates; and that our College of Bishops be, and are hereby, authorized to appoint a delegation, consisting of two ministers and one layman, to bear our Christian salutations to their next ensuing General Conference.

*Resolved*, That, in order to remove all obstacles to formal fraternity between the two Churches, our College of Bishops is authorized to appoint a commission, consisting of three ministers and two laymen, to meet a similar commission authorized by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to adjust all existing difficulties.

Accordingly delegates were appointed, who had a hearty reception at the General Conference of the other branch of Episcopal Methodism, in 1876: commissioners were also appointed.\* These last were promptly met by commissioners from the other branch, clothed with equal powers.† The Joint Commission met at Cape May, August 17-23, 1876, and after prayerful and patient deliberation unanimously agreed upon terms, which were accepted as a finality by the ensuing General Conferences of both

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\* Fraternal delegates: Lovick Pierce, D.D., James A. Duncan, D.D., and Landon C. Garland, LL.D. Commissioners: E. H. Myers, D.D., R. K. Hargrove, D.D., T. M. Finney, DD., Hon. R. B. Vance, Hon. David Clopton.

† M. D'C. Crawford, D.D., J. P. Newman, D.D., E. Q. Fuller, D.D., General C. B. Fisk, Hon. E. L. Fancher.



Churches. Conflicting claims to property were adjudicated by the Joint Commission both on general principles and in special cases; and directions were laid down, regulating the occupation of places as well as property, and it will be well for the peace of both parties and the honor of Christianity if they be well observed. In the beginning of their labors the Joint Commission adopted, without a dissentient voice, this basis and declaration of the relations of the two Churches:

*Status of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and their coördinate relations as legitimate branches of Episcopal Methodism:*

Each of said Churches is a legitimate branch of Episcopal Methodism in the United States, having a common origin in the Methodist Episcopal Church organized in 1784; and since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was consummated in 1846, by the voluntary exercise of the right of the Southern Annual Conferences, ministers and members, to adhere to that Communion, it has been an evangelical Church, reared on scriptural foundations, and her ministers and members, with those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have constituted one Methodist family, though in distinct ecclesiastical Connections.

The suggestion was thrown out; it grew into a general assembly of all the sons of Wesley—an Ecumenical Methodist Conference. Arrangements were completed for representatives from both hemispheres. As to the place of meeting no second opinion was heard, all feeling that for the first general assembly of the bands into which the United Societies of John Wesley had spread, no other spot could offer a scene so fitting as that City Road Chapel which had formed the principal center of his labors, and close to which his course had been finished and his dust laid. Of four hundred clerical and lay delegates one-half was to be chosen by churches in Europe with their missions, and one-half by churches in America with their missions. Friday, the 5th of August, 1881, was observed as a day of special prayer, on behalf of the approaching Conference.

On Wednesday, the 7th of September, the delegated brethren were assembled in the appointed place. They represented twenty-eight different denominations, and about five millions of living members, who preached or heard the gospel in thirty languages. They came from England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Africa, India, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Polynesia, and from all sections of the United States, from Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, South America, and the West Indies.

The opening sermon was preached by the senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church,\* after which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to the Conference. The address of welcome was made by the President of the Wesleyan Conference.† Concluding, he said: "What hath God wrought?" That was John Wesley's text when he laid the foundation of this chapel. 'I was curious enough to ask myself how many Methodists there were in the world at that time, and the total number, including America, was a little more than forty-four thousand. Here is a good stand-point by means of which we can measure, to some extent at least, what God has wrought for us and by us—forty-four thousand and a few more, including America—a hundred years ago. To-day we speak of millions. We do not know what millions are; very few of us, by experience and observation, have been able to realize the idea of a million; but still we speak of millions, and we do not speak without the book when we speak of millions gathered at this day, by our humble instrumentality and that of our fathers, to our fellowship, and training under our care for the best of all fellowships at the right-hand of God. In repeating the welcome, which it was my official duty to offer to this Conference, I may fall back upon the words of Charles Wesley—for I have almost learned to think in them, and I have found few words more eminently adapted to the promotion of vital godliness. One of his earliest compositions is headed, 'On Receiving a Christian Friend.' It stands in the singular, but we can easily adapt it:

Welcome, friends, in that great Name,  
Whence our every blessing flows;  
Enter, and increase the flame,  
Which in all our bosoms glows."

For two weeks the assembly continued, during which the communion of saints was practically taught and personally realized. Sundays were given to devotion, and the week-day sessions to discussion, by prepared papers and freer conversations, on the great topics that engage the heads and hearts and hands of Wesleyans everywhere; the sum of which is—spreading scriptural holiness over all lands. \ It was well remarked by one of the

\* Bishop Simpson, whose lamented death is announced while these pages are going through the press. † George Osborn, D.D., President of Richmond College (theological), London.

speakers on the last day: "Methodism is admitted to be, in its ground-plan and in its structure, of all Church systems the closest in texture and the most cohesive. Its original structure was, that of UNITED SOCIETIES. No other Church has such a concatenation of appliances for binding its members together. It is, in fact as in name, a Connection, bound and fastened together by class-meetings, love-feasts, leaders' meetings, quarterly-meetings, district-meetings, Conferences, the community of ministers which the itinerancy secures, affiliated Conferences, fraternal Conferences, and now the top stone is at last brought on with shouting—the Ecumenical Conference."

The entertainment of this company devolved upon the English Methodists, and nothing was left undone by those who keep the old homestead to make the family reunion pleasant and edifying. It was a love-feast of nations, and the members separated with a greater love for the Head of the Church, and for that Christian family of which they formed a part, greater love for each other, and for all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ, of every clime, and a greater hope for the conversion of the world. Before adjournment another Ecumenical Conference was arranged for, to be held on the western side of the Atlantic.

While this record of the rise and progress of Methodism is being finished, notes of preparation are heard in the land. A hundred years ago the Christmas Conference was held. Then the Church was organized with eighty-three preachers and fifteen thousand members, which now numbers the former by thousands and the latter by millions. The times favor a Centennial Celebration, and as to the place of meeting, Baltimore has no rival. The graves of Asbury and Lee are there, and not far away sleeps the noble Strawbridge. And there, as from a mount of vision, may the people called Methodists, grateful for what God has done for them and by them in the past, catch an inspiring view of what God will do for them and by them, if faithful to their principles, in the next HUNDRED YEARS.

## APPENDIX.

### METHODISTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

#### EPISCOPAL METHODISTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

CHURCHES.	Itinerant Preachers.	Local Preachers.	Lay Members.
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	12,647	12,026	1,769,534
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.....	4,126	5,892	894,132
African Methodist Episcopal (Bethel) Church	1,832	9,760	391,044
African Methodist Episcopal (Zion) Church.	2,000	2,750	300,000
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.....	1,046	683	155,000
Evangelical Association.....	953	599	119,758
United Brethren.....	1,257	963	159,547
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church	112	40	3,500
	23,973	32,713	3,792,515

#### NON-EPISCOPAL METHODISTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

Methodist Protestant Church.....	1,358	1,010	123,054
American Wesleyan Church.....	267	215	23,590
Free Methodist Church.....	263	326	12,719
Primitive Methodist Church.....	27	162	3,716
Independent Methodist Church.....	25	27	5,000
Congregational Methodists.....	.....	23	20,000
	1,940	1,763	188,079

#### METHODISTS IN CANADA.

The Methodist Church of Canada.....	1,316	1,261	128,644
Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada....	259	255	25,671
Primitive Methodist Church.....	89	246	8,090
Bible Christian Church.....	79	197	7,398
British Methodist Episcopal Church, colored	45	20	2,100
	1,688	1,979	171,903

#### METHODISTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND MISSIONS.

British Wesleyan Methodists in Great Britain	1,917	14,183	441,484
British Wesleyan Methodists in Missions....	385	.....	70,747
Primitive Methodists.....	1,147	15,982	196,480
New Connection Methodists.....	188	1,271	29,299
United Free Methodists.....	391	3,417	84,152
Wesleyan Reform Union.....	551	.....	8,663
Bible Christians (including Australia).....	228	1,909	28,624
Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.....	207	234	58,577
Countess of Huntingdon's Connection.....	.....	.....	19,159
	5,014	36,996	937,185

#### WESLEYAN AFFILIATING CONFERENCES.

Irish Wesleyan Conference.....	239	.....	25,050
French Wesleyan Conference.....	196	.....	2,024
Australian Conference.....	449	4,480	69,392
South African Conference.....	167	.....	26,038
	1,051	4,480	126,504
Grand Total.....	33,666	77,931	5,216,186



## RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES.

The census of 1880, so far as the statistics of Churches are concerned, has not yet appeared in print. From the census of 1870 the following table is taken.

When Methodism began in America the Protestant Episcopal Church had been on the ground for one hundred and sixty years. Congregationalism followed in 1620, when the Mayflower landed with an organized Church. The Baptists, if dating no farther back in America than Roger Williams, may be reckoned from 1639, and the Presbyterians from 1684.

DENOMINATIONS.	Organi- zations.	Edifices.	Sittings.	Property.
Baptist (regular).....	14,174	12,857	3,997,116	\$39,229,221
Baptist (other).....	1,355	1,105	363,019	2,378,997
Christian.....	3,578	2,822	865,602	6,425,137
Congregational.....	2,887	2,715	1,117,212	25,069,698
Episcopal (Protestant).....	2,835	2,601	991,051	36,514,549
Evangelical Association.....	815	641	193,796	2,301,650
Friends.....	692	662	224,664	3,939,560
Jewish.....	189	152	73,265	5,155,234
Lutheran.....	3,032	2,766	977,332	14,917,747
Methodist.....	25,278	21,337	6,528,209	69,854,121
Miscellaneous.....	27	17	6,935	135,650
Moravian ( <i>Unitas Fratrum</i> ).....	72	67	25,700	709,100
Mormon.....	189	171	87,838	656,750
New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian).....	90	61	18,755	869,700
Presbyterian (regular).....	6,262	5,683	2,198,900	47,828,732
Presbyterian (other).....	1,562	1,388	499,344	5,436,524
Reformed Church in America.....	471	468	227,228	10,359,255
Reformed Church in United States...	1,256	1,145	431,700	5,775,215
Roman Catholic.....	4,127	3,806	1,990,514	60,985,566
Second Advent.....	225	140	34,555	306,240
Shaker.....	18	18	8,850	86,900
Spiritualist.....	95	22	6,970	100,150
Unitarian.....	331	310	155,471	6,282,675
United Brethren in Christ.....	1,445	937	265,025	1,819,810
Universalists.....	719	602	210,884	5,692,325
Unknown (local missions).....	26	27	11,925	687,800
Unknown (union).....	409	562	153,202	965,295
All denominations.....	72,459	63,082	21,665,062	\$354,483,581

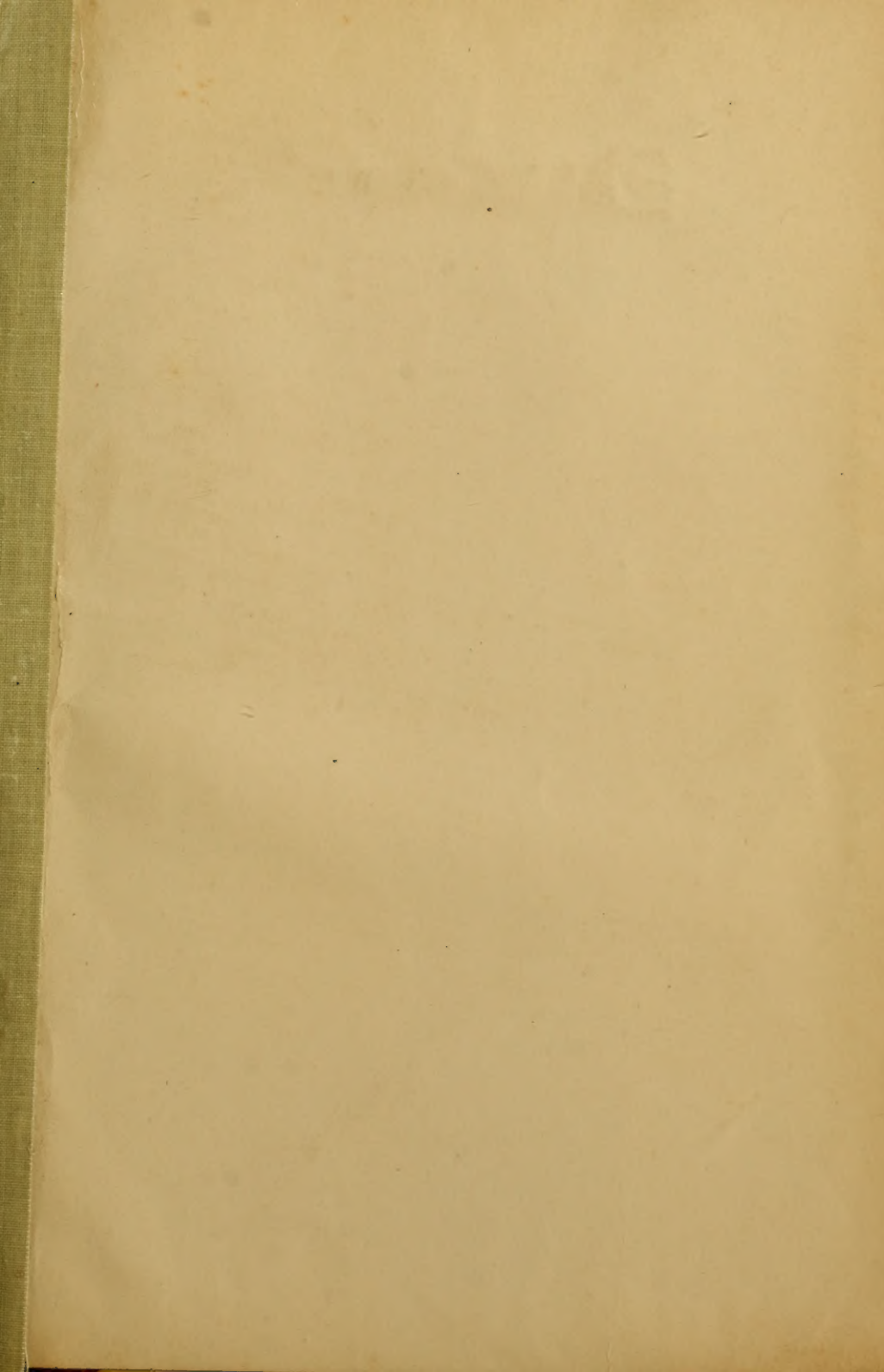
From the last figures the "Methodist Year-book" makes the following exhibit:

Total Methodists.....	27,538	22,915	7,455,937	\$73,975,581
Total Baptists (all kinds).....	15,829	13,962	4,360,135	41,608,198
Total Presbyterians.....	7,824	7,070	2,698,244	53,265,256
Total Congregationalists.....	2,887	2,715	1,117,212	25,069,698
Total Protestant Episcopal.....	2,835	2,601	991,051	36,514,549
Total Roman Catholic.....	4,127	3,806	1,990,514	60,985,566
			Ministers.	Members.
Total Methodists in the United States.....			25,835*	3,993,724
Total Baptists (North and South).....			19,246	2,552,129
Total Presbyterians (North and South).....			8,898	1,002,944
Total Congregationalists.....			3,723	387,619
Total Protestant Episcopal.....			3,630	313,889

\* Exclusive of 34,714 local preachers, many of them ordained.





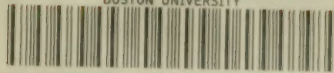




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